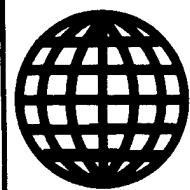


14 July 1993



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CONTENTS

14 July 1993

POLITICAL

International Affairs

Indo-Israeli Economic Pacts Get Final Touches	[THE HINDU 17 Apr]	1
Israeli Ambassador Interviewed on Growing Relations	[SUNDAY 1 May]	1
Government Urged to Fight U.S. Pressure Over Trade Act 301	[THE STATESMAN 5 May]	2
U.S. Warning on Possible Trade Sanctions Criticized	[ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA 7 May]	3
Exaggerations in U.S. Figures in IPR Cases Found	[INDIAN EXPRESS 11 May]	4
Israeli Foreign Minister's Visit Seen Important	[ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA 14 May]	4
Tussle for Power Between Federal, State Governments Viewed	[THE STATESMAN 20 May]	5
Mallot Said to Symbolize New Talk-Tough American Image	[THE STATESMAN 21 May]	6

Regional Affairs

Difficulties of Bangladesh Border Residents Analyzed	[THE WEEK 18 Apr]	7
JKLF Chief Interviewed on Conciliation with Pakistan	[THE WEEK 16 May]	9
Kashmiris Seen Increasingly Alienated	[THE WEEK 16 May]	10
Delhi Police Arrest 'Notorious Pakistan Spy'	18 Jun [INDIAN EXPRESS 20 Jun]	12
Article Considers Issues of Kashmir, Proliferation	[INDIAN EXPRESS 24 Jun]	13

Internal Affairs

Jyoti Basu Blamed	[BARTAMAN 6 Apr]	14
Ghising Threatening CPM	[BARTAMAN 5 Apr]	15
Supreme Court Stays Madhya Pradesh Verdict	[THE HINDU 17 Apr]	15
Prime Minister Rao Rules Out Midterm Poll	[THE SUNDAY TIMES OF INDIA 18 Apr]	16
Paper's Analyst Discusses Sharif's Dismissal	[THE HINDU 19 Apr]	17
Gorkhaland: GNLF Adopting Threatening Posture	[DECCAN HERALD 21 Apr]	17
Commentary Laments Free Hand of Militant Shiv-Sena	[DECCAN HERALD 21 Apr]	19
JPC Urged To Conduct Proper Inquiry of Ministers	[INDIAN EXPRESS 22 Apr]	21
Rajiv's Constituency Amethi May Host AICC Session	[INDIAN EXPRESS 22 Apr]	21
Split Between CPM Alliance With RSP, Forward Bloc Reported	Contesting Elections Separately [BARTAMAN 25 Apr]	22
Declared Non-Marxist	[BARTAMAN 27 Apr]	22
Disunity Benefits BJP	[ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA 28 Apr]	23
CPM Alone Upholding Marxism	[ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA 27 Apr]	23
Communists Termed 'Ideologically Orphaned'	[ORGANISER 25 Apr]	24
Enthusiasm for BJP Claimed in Bengal	[ORGANISER 25 Apr]	25
Benazir Makes Striking Turnaround to Join President	[INDIAN EXPRESS 26 Apr]	26
More Prominent Role for Bengali Language Seen Imminent	[BARTAMAN 26 Apr]	27
Communists Seen Searching for New Symbols, Heroes	[THE TELEGRAPH 1 May]	29
Islamic Conference Dubs India as Villain	[INDIAN EXPRESS 1 May]	30
Seshan Reminded To Be Fair, Nonpartisan	[INDIAN EXPRESS 1 May]	31
Political Leadership, Direction Termed 'Third Rate'	[THE TELEGRAPH 4 May]	32
CPI Seen Increasingly Insignificant	[THE STATESMAN 4 May]	33
Panchayat Election Success Seen Crucial for Congress (I)	[ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA 5 May]	33
Congress (I) Seen In Throes of Identity Crisis	[FRONTLINE 7 May]	35
Secular Ethos Claimed Alien to Society, Traitorous	[ORGANISER 9 May]	36
Mamata Banerjee Seen at Odds With Congress Leadership	[BARTAMAN 11 May]	37
Muslims Seen Unwilling to Accommodate Hindu Sentiments	[THE TELEGRAPH 11 May]	39
President's Rule Extension in BJP States Regretted	[INDIAN EXPRESS 11 May]	40
Ottapalam Election Postponement Viewed	[INDIAN EXPRESS 11 May]	41
Impeachment Motion Text for Judge Ramaswamy Viewed	[INDIAN EXPRESS 11 May]	42

CPM Seen Conducting 'Charade' in Promoting Women [<i>THE TELEGRAPH</i> 12 May]	43
Judiciary Claimed Corrupted, Partial [<i>THE STATESMAN</i> 12 May]	43
Promotion of Use of Bengali in Government Called 'Chauvinism' [<i>THE TELEGRAPH</i> 13 May]	45
Congress (I) Maneuvering Said Effort to Avoid Split [<i>THE TELEGRAPH</i> 13 May]	46
Congress (I) Said Destroying Faith in Legal System [<i>THE STATESMAN</i> 13 May]	47
Postponement of State Elections Criticized [<i>ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA</i> 14 May]	48
Postponement of Elections Seen Damaging to Congress (I) [<i>THE STATESMAN</i> 15 May]	49
Attempt To Reunite Janata Dal Factions Analyzed	49
Little Success [<i>SUNDAY 15 May</i>]	49
Communist-Like Leadership [<i>SUNDAY 15 May</i>]	51
Mulayam Singh Hampering Unity [<i>THE WEEK</i> 9 May]	51
V.P. Singh Divisive Force [<i>THE WEEK</i> 9 May]	53
RSS General Secretary Interviewed on Theocratic State [<i>SUNDAY 15 May</i>]	54
Former BJP Chief Minister Said Courting Muslims [<i>SUNDAY 15 May</i>]	54
Government Claimed Distorting Information on Kashmir Temples [<i>ORGANISER</i> 16 May]	55
CPM Term 'Big Brother' Using 'Arrogance of Power' [<i>THE STATESMAN</i> 17 May]	57
Congress (I) Deterioration Seen Responsible for BJP Growth [<i>ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA</i> 20 May]	58
Government Ban of RSS Seen Ineffective Against 'Fundamentalism' [<i>ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA</i> 20 May]	59
Advani Seen Most Representative Leader for BJP [<i>THE ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY OF INDIA</i> 21 May]	60
Paper on Indo-U.S. Dialogue on Human Rights [<i>INDIAN EXPRESS</i> 19 Jun]	62

ECONOMIC

'Tremendous' Scope for Trade With Central Asia [<i>PATRIOT</i> 13 Apr]	63
Ministry Reports Widening Trade Deficit [<i>THE TIMES OF INDIA</i> 14 Apr]	63
Handloom Sector: Center Initiates Relief [<i>DECCAN HERALD</i> 21 Apr]	63
Prominent Economist Questions Government Spending [<i>INDIAN EXPRESS</i> 22 Apr]	64
Hike in Telephone Tariffs Would Take Effect in May [<i>INDIAN EXPRESS</i> 27 Apr]	65
External Aid: Delayed Use by Railways Criticized [<i>INDIAN EXPRESS</i> 27 Apr]	66
Dunkel Proposals' Possible Impact Viewed [<i>ORGANISER</i> 9 May]	66
Industrialists Said Fearing Foreign Competition [<i>THE TELEGRAPH</i> 12 May]	69
Commentary Notes Success in Containing Inflation [<i>All India Radio Network</i> 18 Jun]	69

MILITARY

Former Army Chief Urges Limiting Internal Deployment [<i>INDIAN EXPRESS</i> 21 Apr]	71
Standing Committee Endorses Defense Expenditure [<i>INDIAN EXPRESS</i> 27 Apr]	72
Navy Struggling to Obtain Its Share of Defense Funds [<i>THE STATESMAN</i> 30 Apr]	72
Defense Expenditure Increases Seen Unjustified [<i>THE TELEGRAPH</i> 6 May]	74

SOCIAL ISSUES

Further Investigation of Film Industry Urged [<i>INDIAN EXPRESS</i> 21 Apr]	76
Population Crossing 900 Million Mark [<i>THE TELEGRAPH</i> 12 May]	76

International Affairs

Indo-Israeli Economic Pacts Get Final Touches

93AS0843A Madras *THE HINDU* in English
17 Apr 93 p 6

[Text] New Delhi, April 16—Israel is in the process of finalising a series of economic agreements with the Indian Government for promotion of trade relations between the two countries.

Announcing this at a seminar on "India-Israeli Business Opportunities," organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry here on Thursday, the Israeli Ambassador, Mr. Ephraim Dowek, said these agreements, to be signed during the forthcoming visit of the Israeli Foreign Minister would focus on avoidance of double taxation, economic cooperation, exemption from levies and for setting up a framework for commercial exchange and joint ventures.

In a new policy strategy for the 1990s Israel, he said, was looking towards India as a potential business partner for mutual benefit.

In his presentation on "Challenges facing the economy and industry in Israel," Mr. Dov Lautman, president, Manufacturers' Association of Israel (MAI) and Chairman, Delta Galil Industries Ltd, said Israel was interested in uniting the relative advantages of India and Israel for each other's benefit. "India and its neighbouring countries are the fastest growing regions in the world. With the availability of trained and skilled labour at cheaper prices in India and the advanced technology of Israel, there are immense opportunities to do business together," he said.

"We can have a 50 per cent growth in the trade between the two countries and we can sustain this growth for the next six years," Mr. Lautman said. At present, the trade between the two nations stood at 200-million dollars, which, he said, was a pittance.

In the absence of language and other barriers, Indo-Israeli trade and business can really prosper. Stressing there was a need to enter into proper quality relationships, Mr. Lautman said he will ask Israeli entrepreneurs to visit India and probe joint venture collaboration prospects.

"It is a complicated and competitive world and things are changing fast. If we do business together, with our capacities, we will be able to do good business and make money," Mr. Lautman said.

Tracing the economic liberalisation measures in his country, Mr. Lautman said Israel had free trade agreements with the U.S., European Community and the EFTA countries and urged the Indian industry to have joint manufacturing facilities in Israel using the raw materials and inputs from India.

Israel, he said, was moving towards zero import duty, which would offer attractive opportunities for local manufacturers. Mr. Lautman is leading an eight-member delegation from the MAI to discuss joint ventures and collaboration possibilities with Indian companies.

Earlier, Dr. Gurpreet Singh, past president of the CII [Confederation of Indian Industry], called for a specific action plan for increasing Indo-Israeli trade. He requested the MAI to assist in establishing at least 10 new joint ventures, in establishing marketing networks to take advantage of Israel's quota-free access to the U.S., EC and EFTA countries. He called for working together on total quality management and hoped Indian companies would be able to make use of the Israeli marketing skills. He said Indian companies can offer goods and services for counter-trade opportunities in East European and African markets.

Israeli Ambassador Interviewed on Growing Relations

93AS0837B Calcutta *SUNDAY* in English
1 May 93 pp 64-65

[Excerpts from an Interview with Israeli Ambassador Ephraim Dowek by Ketan Narottam: "Israel Will Help India to Tackle Terrorism"; place and date not given]

[Text] SUNDAY: It has been over a year since India established full diplomatic relations with Israel. What would you say is the most significant thing that has been achieved so far?

Ephraim Dowek: The most significant thing achieved is the establishment of embassies in both the countries. Secondly, the exchange of important missions. Indian delegations from the Confederation of Indian Industry, ministry of agriculture, solar energy, etc., have visited Israel. Similarly, many Israeli missions have come to India.

But more important, we are in the process of putting the final touches to a series of agreements in various fields like civil aviation, science and technology, agriculture, prevention of double taxation and culture. Last year, Indo-Israeli trade touched the \$100 million mark, which represents a 30 per cent increase over the year before. We may not see eye to eye on various matters, but at least a dialogue between the two countries has been established.

SUNDAY: Critics say that after the initial euphoria of establishing normal diplomatic relations, the momentum has slowed down.

Ephraim Dowek: I don't think that there was ever an euphoria. And I do not think that it has been an anti-climax. Things have to proceed step by step. It is a complicated process.

SUNDAY: Some time back, an Israeli defence delegation had made a visit to India. What has been the nature of cooperation in the defence sector?

Ephraim Dowek: It was not a defence delegation. Rather, it was a team of military industry personnel from Israel that visited India. The visit was not meant for signing agreements. It was just an exploratory visit. The delegation wanted to know what India could offer and what India needed. I do not have the details.

SUNDAY: India and Israel face a similar problem in terrorism. Do you think the two countries could cooperate to tackle the menace?

Ephraim Dowek: All enlightened nations should unite to tackle terrorism. In fact, this is one area where India and Israel will be cooperating. We have to eradicate terrorism, which has become the plague of 20th century. There are some countries which are encouraging terrorism. Not only are they encouraging terrorists, they are also providing shelter to them. The nations which face terrorism should not yield to blackmail. Blackmail is another form of terrorism.

Though we have been criticised for expelling 400 people recently from Israel, we stand by what we did. The expelled men were all terrorists belonging to the Hamas organisation. Hamas is one of the most dreaded terrorist organisations in the world financed by various international terrorist groups. India and Israel see eye to eye as far as combatting terrorism is concerned.

It is unfortunate that even after 47 years of establishment of the United Nations, terrorism has not been properly defined. Whatever be the cause, terrorism cannot be justified. No matter what the cause is, you just cannot justify any form of terrorism. Some call a terrorist a freedom fighter. But as far as I am concerned, he is a plain murderer.

SUNDAY: Some time back, there was a proposal of using India and Israel on both sides of the Middle East to act as barriers to contain Islamic fundamentalism.

Ephraim Dowek: The countries which face the maximum threat from Islamic fundamentalism are the Islamic countries themselves. Fundamentalism will set them back by more than 500 years. The Islamic countries should contain terrorism. What is happening in Algeria and Egypt? They understand that the danger to them is bigger than anybody else. It is for each country to see that terrorists do not achieve their objective. It is not for India or Israel alone to check the rise of Muslim fundamentalism.

SUNDAY: What is the Israeli view of nuclear proliferation? According to American newspaper reports, Pakistan and Iran are collaborating in the field of nuclear technology.

Ephraim Dowek: Our viewpoint is the same as that of India—that there should be no proliferation of nuclear devices and everything should be done to remove the

nuclear proliferation threat. It could be a multilateral or bilateral effort. It could also be at a regional level: it should be ensured that all weapons of mass destruction in each region are removed.

Countries like Iraq have signed the NPT [Nonproliferation Treaty] but they have not adhered to it even for a minute. We are closely following what has happened in this region (South Asia). In our area, when we found that the situation threatened our survival we did not hesitate to act. Everybody knows what happened in Iraq (referring to the Israeli bombing of Iraqi nuclear reactors). Life is more important than anything else. We will act wherever we are directly affected by the danger.

SUNDAY: You have been quoted as saying in Calcutta recently that a weak Israel means a weak India. Can you elaborate?

Ephraim Dowek: I have not made such a categorical statement. I have said that we in Israel have realised that a weak India will mean a weaker Israel. India and Israel are confronted with similar problems (like Muslim fundamentalism, nuclear proliferation, etc.). If one democracy falls, obviously the other democracy will face problems.

SUNDAY: What role do you see for India in the ongoing peace talks between the Arabs and the Israelis?

Ephraim Dowek: India is participating in the five multilateral committees of the peace process. We feel that the India's contribution will be significant. We also hope that the stalled peace process will restart as soon as possible. The Arabs stopped negotiations long before the deportation. Anyway, it's all a part of the haggling. I am confident that the talks will start soon.

SUNDAY: What is Israel's stand on Kashmir?

Ephraim Dowek: Israel never interferes in the internal affairs of any country. Kashmir is a part of India. And I am the Israeli ambassador to the entire Indian Union which includes Kashmir.

Government Urged to Fight U.S. Pressure Over Trade Act 301

93AS0865E Calcutta *THE STATESMAN* in English
5 May 93 p 8

[Editorial: "Special Action"]

[Text] The decision of the U.S. Trade Representative, Mr Mickey Kantor, once again to put India on the "priority list" under the Special-301 provision of the omnibus Trade Act indicates that the Clinton Administration's international trade policy is not likely to encourage the forces of growth and integration, which are the objectives of the Uruguay Round of GATT talks. Indeed, the Washington step has not come as a surprise considering Mr Kantor's stand on negotiations with the

European Community, which were marked by a surprising disregard for the elementary norms of international economic diplomacy. On more than one occasion, this behaviour brought trade talks between the E.C. and the United States to the verge of collapse, striking at the hope that the GATT talks, dealing with a much larger canvas, would succeed. It is a miracle that all hope on the Uruguay Round is not yet lost, but this much can be said that Mr Kantor's statements over the past few months almost brought the negotiations to a halt.

In fact, a reactivation of the Special-301 provision with regard to India was on the cards ever since the Clinton Administration began laying emphasis on the principle of "fair trade" as opposed to the "free trade" variant espoused by the Bush regime. Now that the step has been taken, it is up to New Delhi to react, and react in such a way as to let Washington know that India expects to be treated fairly, and that it will not succumb to arm-twisting methods employed by the U.S. Trade Representative. Needless to say, Washington is within its rights to take appropriate measures under its Trade Act, and also respond in the way it wants to pressures exerted by domestic economic lobbies. The same principle of free action under domestic laws extends to India, and there is no question of soft-pedalling the issue in the larger interests of Indo-U.S. trade. Specifically, it has been pointed out that the patents issue is at the heart of Washington's complaints with progress on copyrights and trademarks being satisfactory. The Indian stand on patents may or may not be justified, but the fact remains that the entire subject is being discussed as part of the Uruguay Round. New Delhi cannot be faulted on its stand of settling the issue at the multilateral forum, and if Washington attaches the same importance to the GATT negotiations, as it says it does, it would not have opted for unilateral action on the issue. Given the short history of Mr Kantor's dealings in international economic diplomacy, it is possible that he may upstage his predecessor, Mrs Carla Hills, in taking punitive action against this country. New Delhi should fight such measures at the multilateral level.

U.S. Warning on Possible Trade Sanctions

Criticized

93AS0854A *Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA*
in Bengali 7 May 93 p 4

[Editorial: "Clause 301 Again"]

[Text] Coming out after answering questions of the joint parliamentary committee on the share scandal, Finance Minister Manmohan Singh said that he has enjoyed each minute of that question-answer. Surely one who had such misgivings as Manmohan, who is visiting Washington, would be unnerved with fear and concern after hearing the news that the United States has imposed special clause 301 of its trade regulations on India. However, after noticing or hearing his reactions probably some people were a little bit surprised. The finance minister visibly did not pay any heed to this declaration

of war by the U.S. Government. His views were: disagreement takes place on various issues and that is quite possible; it is always necessary to continue negotiations for the solution of disputes; it remains to be seen whether because of disagreement on one issue harm comes to the overall good India-U.S. relations. These words sound like that of a crack diplomat. There is no doubt that by tackling various types of demands and advisory pressures at home and abroad in the past two years the prudent finance minister has become more wise. His reactions were not a manifestation of mere diplomacy but also a proof that he understands reality. If India does not amend its patents act (and does not also meet the U.S. demands on a few other things), then the U.S. Government will make preparations for punishing it. However harsh and irritating this warning might sound at present, in reality such punishment is a possibility but it is not guaranteed. Such declarations of warning were also heard during George Bush's period. Preparations were also made for giving punishment, but were empty ones. It remains to be seen if the result is going to be different during Bill Clinton's period.

The principal reason at the back of giving warnings to Brazil, Thailand, and India lies inside the United States. To gain new opportunities and advantages at home and abroad, different lobbies in the United States continuously put pressure on the government. Inside the government also a strong tug-of-war constantly goes on with the President on one side and the Congress on the other. To put a check on this tug-of-war the President has to perform different tricks. Sometimes he has to become furious to an obstinate nation. By creating pressure on India for introducing strictly the patents act [301 property rights act] or allowing an unrestricted entry to the foreign businessmen into the country's insurance market, he has to satisfy patent industries and insurance companies in the United States. It is primarily an internal game of the United States that at present India has got into a fix. That can cause problems, but there is no reason to be apprehensive.

There are enough reasons to be careful, though no reason to be apprehensive. The finance minister talked about negotiations, but that is a relative thing. It is especially necessary to make all kinds of efforts to fulfill the goal of determining a policy on trade and economic exchanges among different nations through multinational discussions from the GATT platform. The way the Washington authorities are making unilateral decisions by slighting this multinational platform is harmful to the international economy and trade. Such types of injustices have occurred and are occurring in other fields, too, and as a result the international trade environment is being ruined. India has to make efforts to resist it, and it will not be alone in that endeavor. But another thing India has to do, and it has to be done alone, is self-rectification. The demand Washington is making for the amendment of the patents act is not merely the demand of a powerful one, there are some strong justifications in its favor. The patents act which is in force in this country

could draw some benefits to the indigenous traders and consumers, but the fact is that this act is not in conformity with international practice. India did not sign the Parry Convention [name as published] relating to patents; otherwise it will not have its own laws. One could be noisy with the criticism of the Parry Convention, but a truth cannot be denied that all important nations of the world (including China) have accepted this law. In this sphere India is alone and, thus, being spotted. So long it has carried itself alone. Whether it could be done in the future depends mainly on the U.S. President's own political problems. The experience of the first 100 days has not been very enjoyable for Clinton; his popularity is at a low-ebb now. In order to make the local industrialists happy, if he decides that it would be an excellent policy to impose pressure on India, then it will become difficult for India to resist that pressure. It is not the time for obstinacy. India should remain fully alert and always be prepared to take steps according to the situation. The second phase of the economic chess game is now on the way to its finish.

Exaggerations in U.S. Figures in IPR Cases Found

93AS0863G Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English
11 May 93 p 13

[Text] New Delhi—The U.S. administration may not take retaliatory steps against India under Special 301 in the immediate future. The U.S. government sources clarified here on Monday that the administration was still sympathetic to India's difficulty in accepting the IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) regime but it named India among "priority foreign countries" for retaliatory steps to satisfy the U.S. congress. It is obligatory on the part of the U.S. administration to report to the U.S. congress about the progress in protecting intellectual property rights of U.S. citizens in other countries.

The decision will not have any adverse impact on Indo-U.S. trade in the short run, the sources said and pointed out that the trade between the two countries increased even after items were removed from the General Scheme of Preference (GSP) last year.

Asked why the Government named India at a time when the matter was being negotiated at the Uruguay Round on international trade, these sources said the United States was not sure of a successful conclusion to the trade negotiations. The IPR issue was being discussed bilaterally for the last 12 years and it was politically not acceptable to them to wait for the result of the Uruguay Round.

"We have to explain to our taxpayers what we are doing to protect the IPR, but we accept that it is difficult for the Indian government to accept them," said these sources.

According to U.S. drug companies they were losing \$220 million every year on account of lack of protection to IPR. The U.S. government sources admit that this is a highly exaggerated figure.

They say it could be around \$40 million if calculated on the basis of drug prices in India.

There are many options before the U.S. administration but it has not yet thought of any. Sources said countervailing duty on some of the products could be one. The retaliatory steps if taken may be targeted at the industry most responsible for it. In the present case it could be chemical and agricultural sectors in India, the sources said.

Israeli Foreign Minister's Visit Seen Important

93AS0883C Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA
in Bengali 14 May 93 p 4

[Editorial: "Peres Visit to India"]

[Text] Whatever prosaic praise Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres smilingly showered during his 3-day visit to India, or how he tried to make the journalists understand that the objective of Tel Aviv was to enter into bilateral agreements with India on various innocent topics from agriculture to culture, it did not exactly remain secret that wide ranging discussions took place between the representatives of two governments on the issue of crushing terrorism. It will certainly not be surprising if direct cooperative relations are built between the Mossad—the Israeli intelligence organization—and the Indian intelligence bureau, because the most important task of the government is to work for the security of national interest. But Peres did not disclose any such thing that India sought overtly or covertly any help from Israel in this regard or that Indian intelligence would take training from Mossad experts in the technique of bringing the militants under control. Had he disclosed it, it could have been as much news as a cause of surprise, because the subject was so sensitive, that for any government or diplomat to maintain secrecy was rather a realistic thing. However, Perez has extended in clear terms full support to India on the Kashmir issue and also said that Israel knows that India has a special friendship with several Arab nations and still it is not at all perturbed. On the contrary, it is happy with this simple trust that it will be possible to bring a "permanent" end to the enmity between the Arabs and Israel in the future with the help of India.

Peres' arrival in Delhi was an important event. His meeting with journalists was most remarkable. This was the first time an Israeli leader at such a high level as foreign minister has met Indian journalists. In fact, Israel always had a great interest in establishing relations with India and in strengthening them. It was India which was vacillating for a long time in uncertainty and hesitancy, most probably with a fear in the mind of New Delhi that the Arab nations would be angry and tilt more toward Pakistan. Their fear also took into account importing of

oil at a favorable rate and enjoying other trade benefits from the Arabs. Any way, after a long delay, a clear relationship was established between Tel Aviv and New Delhi, but this did not mean that as a result of it India's relations with the Arab world would turn cool or change. The Palestinian leaders with whom the Indian leaders have such close relations have also admitted that development of such relations with Israel was an inevitable thing. The Arab world knows that some day they will have to also come to agreements with Israel. The old concept that Israel will disappear when eyes are closed, no longer exists. The peace talks on West Asia have started not only with the American pressure but also from this changed thinking. In Delhi, Foreign Minister Peres has once again tried to assure everyone by declaring that Israel will always be included in the efforts to find a solution to the West Asian problems.

Intelligent Peres could certainly guess that New Delhi wanted to use his Indian trip for some intricate matter also. Without being able to avert the Pakistan pressure, the OIC [Organization of Islamic Conference]—the organization of Islamic nations in the world—has made caustic remarks on India's communal situation and has threatened it with economic sanctions, even knowing it was impractical. Although India knows that those were sheer criticism and there was no strong intention or desire behind it, it still dropped a shadow of humiliation on it. Thus, the Indian government felt the need to utter a few words of warning, though in a round about way. New Delhi has played its cards intelligently on all these issues—the arrival of Peres in Delhi, giving importance to that visit, and significant talks on a secret understanding between Israel and India on defense matters—with the objective of letting others guess whatever they want. The talks of the Israeli foreign minister in this regard were also very helpful. After seeing Peres, it has once again been made obvious why the people of the whole world are always afraid of and also show respect at the same to a clear-headed Jew. On whatever subject Peres spoke, whether it was Kashmir, the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, Israeli tomatoes, Japanese Toyota, or the India-Israel joint development fund, he has easily been able to add a special dimension to his speech. But it is difficult to guess how Yasir 'Arafat will react to his quoting Mahatma Gandhi and advising them to be nonviolent.

Tussle for Power Between Federal, State Governments Viewed
93AS0881J Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English
20 May 93 p 8

[Article by Satyabrata Rai Chowdhuri: "New Delhi's Role; Perils of a Strong Centre"]

[Text] There is no denying that the supremacy of the Centre over the States was inherent in the original design of the Indian federal system. Over the years, the Centre has grown stronger partly because of the deliberate efforts of Indian Prime Ministers to make the Centre

all-powerful and partly because of the creation of a number of Central bodies like the Planning Commission, Central Water Commission, the Central Electricity Authority, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the like.

To these we may add other political and economic factors such as the recurrent threats to national unity, the imperatives of development, the establishment of an almost uniform infrastructure of growth, modern means of communication, the reach of the electronic media and the emergence of a national market. All this, it is believed by some, would make the federal system work better. In reality, however, the trend towards growing centralization has imperilled the already fragile structure of national unity.

Still Powerful

A study of the development both at the Centre and State levels will reveal that despite the increase in the role of the Centre, the importance of the States has not declined. The States are still key components in the political system. The administrative staff of State Governments have expanded in recent times. The scope of their activities has enlarged and they have been spending more money. Moreover, with the emergence of non-Congress Governments in the States, there has been an apparent increase in the relative importance and role of the States and of Chief Ministers.

It is unfortunate that the demand by some Chief Ministers for more autonomy has alarmed a section of the ruling elite which thinks that a strong Centre is absolutely necessary to preserve the country's integrity and unity. Indira Gandhi felt it was the cornerstone of a federal polity like India. She believed that Indian nationalism called for the Congress party's domination over as many States as possible regardless of the fairness or otherwise of the means.

She was, by nature, a confrontationist. Determined as she was to remain in power and establish a dynastic rule, she sought to arm the Centre with unlimited powers and, in the process, weakened the party structure and grass-root organizations. She opposed the demands for more financial autonomy proposed by States like West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, and went ahead to spread the Centre's wings, particularly over resource allocation, distribution and expenditure.

Soon after her return to power in 1980, the draft Sixth Five-Year Plan prepared by the Janata Government was drastically revised and the formulation of the new draft was carried out by officers in her Secretariat. Even the Planning Commission knew little about it. No wonder, Chief Ministers completely in the dark about the economic programmes they were supposed to implement.

Indira Gandhi surpassed other Prime Ministers in her abuse of President's Rule by using it to resolve crises in State politics she had deliberately created. She used it as an instrument to liquidate dissent and this strategy not

only threatened the federal system as envisaged by the fathers of the Constitution but also struck at the roots of the national unity.

Indira Gandhi's policy ultimately proved counterproductive. As a reaction, regional parties acquired new strength and status of their own and many Chief Ministers began to demand a review of Centre-State relations. They included Mr. Jyoti Basu, Sheikh Abdullah, Mr. Prakash Singh Badal, M.G. Ramachandran, who dramatized the issue with a hunger-strike in early 1983, and Mr. Ramakrishna Hegde.

Relation Review

Some courageous Governors also supported the demand and one of them, Dharma Vira, in fact, preferred to quit the governorship of Karnataka rather than compromise. In March, 1983, MGR, NTR [expansions not given], Mr. Hegde and Ramachandran extracted from Indira Gandhi, following their conclave in Bangalore, what many had been demanding: the setting up of the Sarkaria Commission to review Centre-State relations.

Indira Gandhi's style of functioning affected Indian federalism in another way. Through her interference in State politics and tendency to select as Chief Ministers of Congress-rule States people without strong independent support, she contributed to political instability in the States rather than the creation of conditions for effective control by the Centre over State politics.

The anti-democratic trait in her character was most evident during the Emergency. The 42nd amendment of the Constitution substantially altered the original federal structure of the Indian polity. It proved that the nature of federalism in India was not contractual but administrative.

The 20-Point programme after the imposition of the Emergency had no economic substance and was, in any case, not a concerted programme or a set of policies for long-range socio-economic and national development. Yet in effect it had the tremendous bandwagon impact of concentrating the entire policy-making process at a central focal point. The initiative and direction in matters of public policy—economic, social and political—were completely centralized at New Delhi. An attempt was also made to incorporate permanent changes in the Constitution which were to have far-reaching effects in further tilting the balance in favour of the Centre.

Alienated Centre

Indira Gandhi's attacks on State Governments run by parties opposed to her own gave the impression that she viewed herself solely as leader of the Congress. Her reluctance to practise proper federalization and decentralization resulted in alienation for the Centre and the emergence of powerful regional parties which have gradually thrived on anti-Centre postures. Regional parties now look upon the Centre as something alien. Every small issue is turned into one of Centre versus the State,

and the fire of the people's discontent is often directed against the Central Government.

Non-Congress Chief Ministers refuse to look at the political issues from a broader perspective with the result that more and more States have turned from non-violence to violence, from tolerance to intolerance and from consensus politics of the 1960's to the politics of confrontation.

There have been occasional outbursts from frustrated State politicians, sometimes even seeking secession from India. The demand for Khalistan is an instance of such an outburst. These demands have been used as pressure tactics for better accommodation. However, the very fact that such demands can be raised again and again pose a threat to the unity of the country.

The days of Indira Gandhi must not return again. To ensure that the Centre's concern should be confined to a few subjects—defence, foreign policy, communications and currency. Other residual subjects should be under the jurisdiction of the States. This was, in fact, the essence of the Anandpur Sahib resolution which merits serious consideration.

Mallot Said to Symbolize New Talk-Tough American Image

93AS08811 Calcutta *THE STATESMAN* in English
21 May 93 p 16

[Article by Raju Santhanam: "Mr. Mallot Goes to Washington; Islamabad, New Delhi in a Fix"]

[Text] New Delhi, May 20.—Mr. John Mallot, the U.S. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, will be returning to Washington a highly satisfied man having spent a lot of time "talking to" officials in India and Pakistan. If Mr. Mallot represents the American viewpoint on South Asia—and there is no reason to doubt it—there are enough "warnings" for both India and Pakistan.

If any official symbolizes the new talk-tough American image, it is Mr. Mallot. In private, he talks tough; in public, he plays the quiet mediator. But to anyone who spends some time with him, it is reasonably clear that Mr. Mallot is not especially interested in getting a "feedback" but more keen on projecting his viewpoint. For example, when quizzed about issues like human rights, he is quick to retort that "it is my show, not yours".

If the "feedback" on Mr. Mallot is any indication, the Clinton Administration is in no mood to take sides. It appears, for instance, to have chosen to equate the recently published reports about Chinese missile shipment to Pakistan to the production of Prithvi missiles in India.

Also, with lack of any irrefutable evidence, it is reportedly not convinced that the Memons, the prime suspects

behind the Bombay blasts, are being supported by Pakistan. And sources close to Mr. Mallot claim that India has made no such charge.

The Clinton Administration is also reportedly convinced about the human rights situation in India. The threat is delivered without much ado: if that remains unresolved, it could affect Indo-U.S. economic cooperation and even IMF aid to India. Said one senior U.S. official: "The U.S. Congress is linking human rights with just about everything".

What the Administration seems prepared to concede is that there could be cause for suspicion about Pakistan supporting the terrorist cause but American action would be dictated by its own assessment rather than by reports furnished by Indian agencies.

More than anything else, the general impression after the visit is that the U.S.A. is keen to allay the impression that there is any U.S. "tilt" towards any country. At the same time, by drumming up the issue of human rights in India and State-sponsored terrorism in Pakistan, the U.S.A. is hoping for what it calls "scaling down of tension".

Regional Affairs

Difficulties of Bangladesh Border Residents Analyzed

93AS0791E Cochin *THE WEEK* in English
18 Apr 93 pp 17-20

[Article by Tapash Ganguly: "Locked Lives: A Fear of the Future Haunts 2 Lakh People in the Indian and Bangladesh Enclaves"; boldface words and quotation marks as published]

[Text] The grim mien is heightened by cheeks hollowed by age. His eyes wander towards a hazy horizon: the future seems even more bleak than the past. For Mohammad Mofizuddin, there is nothing to look forward to. Every month, the 70-year-old landless labourer of Singpara in West Bengal's Jalpaiguri district used to wait for his old-age pension of Rs [Rupees] 60 doled out by the state government. No longer. "For the last seven months the pension has been stopped," he sighs, "and I don't know what my fault is."

Mofizuddin's only fault is that he is [word illegible] man: one of the two lakh residents of the Indian and Bangladesh enclaves on both sides of the border. "The local panchayat (which recommended Mofizuddin's case) should have known that Singpara is a Bangladesh enclave and its residents cannot avail of government benefits," says a senior police officer of Jalpaiguri district.

Little did Sir Cyril Radcliffe know when he bifurcated Bengal in 1947 that the wounds of partition would fester even four decades later. The Partition has long been accepted; but not the status of the 225-odd enclaves. There are 95 Bangladesh enclaves in India, in

Jalpaiguri and Coochbehar districts of West Bengal. The number of Indian enclaves in Bangladesh is 130. Besides these, there are enclaves of a different kind. These are Indian enclaves within the Bangladesh enclaves in India and Bangladesh enclaves within Indian enclaves in Bangladesh.

The enclaves were once part of the kingdom of Coochbehar. Some of these enclaves were locally referred to as the Talukas or Chaklas centuries before they were inhabited by the Muslim soldiers on the payroll of the Mughal emperors. These small areas were later known as 'Moghlams'. Again, there were certain Talukas in southern Coochbehar which were inhabited by the lieutenants of the Coochbehar Raja and are known as 'Rajgirs'.

After Partition, and the subsequent accession of Coochbehar in the state of West Bengal, some of these Moghlams and Rajgirs came to be part of India while the rest remained in East Bengal (later Bangladesh).

Thorny issue: The total area of the enclaves in India and Bangladesh is not more than 50 square miles. However, it has continued to sour relations between the two countries. In 1958, an attempt was made by India and Pakistan to solve the complex issue. Under the Nehru-Feroze Khan Noon pact, 126 Indian enclaves in East Pakistan were to be exchanged with 95 Bangladesh enclaves in India. At the same time it was decided that a part of Berubari in Jalpaiguri district would be handed over to Pakistan prior to the exchange of enclaves.

However, this precondition virtually scuttled the pact. The popular upsurge against the proposed transfer of Berubari became a rallying point for almost all political parties. And the Congress ended up losing much ground in north Bengal, particularly in the Coochbehar and Jalpaiguri districts.

The deteriorating ties between Pakistan and India stalled any progress on the issue. But the birth of Bangladesh in 1971 offered a new opportunity to leaders of both countries to look into the problem afresh. This culminated in the Indira-Mujib pact of 1974. The pact, however, did not dwell on the wholesale exchange of enclaves. Instead, it was decided to transfer Dahagram and Angrapota to Bangladesh in lieu of Berubari as the latter could not be handed over early. At the same time, to facilitate easy access to Dahagram and Angrapota from Panbari Mauza in mainland Bangladesh, Indira Gandhi agreed to grant perpetual lease of the Tin Bigha corridor to Bangladesh.

This agreement, too, floundered in the face of popular resentment. It took 18 years for New Delhi to honour its commitment: last June, Bangladesh was granted permission to use Tin Bigha. This put the brakes on the fast deteriorating relations between the two countries. Had not the kar sevaks reduced the Babri Masjid to rubble, the upswing in relations would have continued.

There is hope yet. On April 10, Prime Minister Narasimha Rao is scheduled to visit Dhaka to attend the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] summit. Observers believe that a little persuasion on his part may help his Bangladeshi counterpart Begum Khaleda Zia to realise the rationale of the wholesale exchange of enclaves, besides discussing a host of bilateral issues including the sharing of the Ganga waters and repatriation of more than 50,000 Chakma refugees in Tripura.

Most of the residents of the Bangladesh enclaves in India, however, do not understand such politics. They just want to remain in India. The local leaders of the CPI(M) [Communist Party of India (Marxist)], Congress and the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] also favour a wholesale exchange of enclaves. As do top officials of the district administration in Coochbehar and Jalpaiguri. Observers point out that the residents of the Indian enclaves in Bangladesh are favourably inclined to this proposal.

Hideout for criminals: According to local police officers, some of these Bangladesh enclaves are used as hideouts by dacoits and smugglers of both countries. "As the Bangladesh enclaves within our territory are out of bounds for us we cannot make any move to apprehend the culprits," says Dhiresh Chandra Pal, circle-inspector of Dinhata in Coochbehar. "Anti-socials are aware of this. Any move on our part to enter these enclaves will immediately trigger a reaction and in no time it would become an international issue." Some of these enclaves in Bangladesh are also used by touts who help Bangladesh nationals to sneak into India.

Deprived of their constitutional rights and living in abject poverty, most of the residents of the Bangladesh enclaves present a pathetic picture. Says Moksed Ali, 60, a resident of Singpara enclave in Berubari Anchal in Jalpaiguri district: "All development activities in our district have bypassed our village. We have no primary school, no primary health centre. Not an inch of pucca road has been built. We have to walk one kilometre for medical assistance. We belong to nowhere. India does not accept us. Neither does Bangladesh."

There are 70 families in Singpara, all Muslims. Agriculture is their main source of livelihood. "For all practical purposes we are Indians," observes Safiuddin Mohammed, 45, "yet we have no voting rights. We are often told that our village might one day be transferred to Bangladesh."

The fear of transfer has already halved the number of residents at Khudipara, a village near Singpara. "There were 30 Muslim families at Khudipara three years ago," says a police officer of Jalpaiguri. "Now there are only about a dozen." Most of them have built their huts in the nearby Indian villages. "But they are still tilling their land at Khudipara," informs the officer.

More than the fear of transfer, people in the enclaves are worried about the proposed construction of roads parallel to the border and the erection of a fence by the Government of India. The decision was taken in the early 1980s at the height of the Assam movement, which had its genesis in the large-scale intrusion of Bangladesh nationals into India.

Despite Dhaka's opposition, India went ahead with its plans to tighten patrolling on the border. Barbed-wire fencing would be erected along the 2,158-km West Bengal-Bangladesh border. The six-feet-high fence will be erected 150 yards inside the Indian territory, with the border road running parallel to it. No permanent structure will be allowed inside this no man's zone to enable BSF [Border Security Forces] to carry on with patrolling uninterrupted.

However, farmers owning land in the excluded zone will be allowed to cultivate their land. They would be able to enter their land through gates constructed every one kilometre of the fence. But not every one is happy with the government's move. "Bangladesh would now consider this road-cum-fencing proposal as a boon," says Santosh Bose, a Congress leader in Satkura village in Jalpaiguri. "When they see that our fencing is 150 yards away from the zero point and our men cannot go to their land freely, they would push their own men to take possession of it."

Last year, Bose led a group of local villagers to stop the joint team of both countries surveying the border. As a result, Bangladesh enclaves in south Berubari, which are due for transfer, could not be brought in the detailed map of the border areas.

Says BJP state unit general secretary Paresh Dutta: "If we cannot solve the enclave problem once and for all, then millions of more intruders would soon enter India." Adds S.P. Biswas, a member of the party's state committee: "We are against any further border survey as they will rake up only tragic memories of the past. But we are not against wholesale exchange of these enclaves. We want a permanent solution of this vexed problem and not any piecemeal solution."

The BJP has demanded a four-km-long corridor through the Tentuliya district in Bangladesh from Chopra More in North Dinajpur district to Chaulhati in Jalpaiguri district. "That would reduce the distance between Chopra to Teesta Bridge by at least 83 kilometres," observes Biswas. "If we can allow free passage facility to Bangladesh through our Tin Bigha corridor why wouldn't that country allow us such a facility in its Tentuliya district?" he asks.

The CPI(M), though, is against such an arrangement. Said Chandi Pal, secretary of CPI(M) Coochbehar district committee: "People of these enclaves, whether in India or Bangladesh, have suffered a lot. They are denied their constitutional rights. This situation cannot and should not continue." Pal welcomes the proposal of fencing the border and the construction of roads.

But Haripada Mondal, a secretariat member of the Forward Bloc, a breakaway group of the All-India Forward Bloc which is a constituent of the Left Front, is against the idea. "We'll oppose it tooth and nail," he says. "Because of this fence, about two lakh acres of land in West Bengal would slip out of our hands. Imagine an Indian farmer having to walk two to three kilometres every day so that he can pass the fence gates and enter his fields. Moreover, he won't have the right to construct a house even on his own land."

Hard life: Madhya Masaldanga is one of the 32 Bangladesh enclaves in Dinhata. There are 16 Masaldangas and Madhya Masaldanga is so named as it is positioned almost at the centre of the Masaldangas. As per government records all these enclaves officially come under the jurisdiction of Bhurungamari police station in Bangladesh.

On March 24, THE WEEK approached Madhya Masaldanga without being stopped by the BSF or the police. Inside the village, a boy was being given a hair cut by an Indian barber. Nepal Sil, the barber, admitted that he earns a major portion of his income by attending to the needs of the people of Masaldanga.

Mohammad Akhtar Ali, 70, is one of the oldest male members of Madhya Masaldanga which has 49 Muslim and two Hindu families. "I have just one acre of land and it is impossible to feed my large family with such a small holding," he says. Gazi Rahaman, the youngest of his five sons, is working as a brick-kiln labourer near Delhi while another is engaged as a mason-helper in Uttar Pradesh. In fact, almost every family of Madhya Masaldanga has sent at least one male member to different parts of the country to augment their income.

"We have heard that we all belong to Bangladesh," said Mubarak Hossain, 35, of Madhya Masaldanga. "But I have never been there. For all practical purposes I am an Indian but I have no ration card, no voting right." The villagers of Madhya Masaldanga plead for the immediate exchange of enclaves. While some of them also want a simultaneous exchange of the population, others are against the move. Says Akhtar Ali, who belongs to the first group: "Three of my sons have married girls from Bangladesh, two of my sons are in Delhi and UP [Uttar Pradesh]. So Partition has no meaning to me. If the exchange of population takes place I'll opt for Bangladesh. Before I die, I want to go to my native village."

But while people like Akhtar Ali live peacefully at Madhya Masaldanga, those at Seuti-Kursa, an Indian enclave in Bangladesh near the Dinhata border, are undergoing a nightmarish experience. On February 27, they were attacked and their huts set on fire. Three days later, the harried villagers took shelter in the nearest BSF outpost at Sahabgunj. A case was lodged with Dinhata police station, too. "But we could not help them in any

way," admitted circle-inspector Pal of Dinhata, "as we can't go to Seuti-Kursa without crossing the border."

But the BSF did organise a flag meeting with its counterpart, Bangladesh Rifles, to rehabilitate the Indians who fled Seuti-Kursa. According to a local BSF officer, "At present, everything is peaceful there but there is no guarantee about the future. Bangladeshi Muslims do not want Indian Muslims to stay in Indian enclaves on their side. They are after their land and hence may mount attacks from time to time. And this will continue till a permanent solution is found for this enclave issue."

JKLF Chief Interviewed on Conciliation with Pakistan

93AS0881F Cochin *THE WEEK* in English
16 May 93 pp 40-41

[Interview with Javed Ahmad Mir by K.M. Rakesh: "Nothing Less Than Freedom"; place and date not given; italicized words and quotation marks as published]

[Text] From pelting stones at government offices to taking up arms for insurgency, the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front's [JKLF] military wing has come a long way. Its cadres are now battle-hardened. The formidable foursome who ran the show in tandem were Hamid Sheikh, Ashfaq Majidwani, Javed Ahmad Mir and Yasin Malik. While Sheikh and Majidwani died in encounters with the security forces, Malik is imprisoned in a farm house on the outskirts of Delhi under the Terrorists and Disruptive Activities [TADA] Prevention Act. The mantle has fallen on Mir who is both the commander and the spokesman of the organisation. Mir has been forced underground by the security crackdown. He spoke to THE WEEK about JKLF and its future plans. Excerpts:

QUESTION: You have decided to narrow down the differences with pro-Pakistan militant outfits. Is it true that militants from different organisations have been waging war against each other?

ANSWER: The JKLF constitution is different from others. The slogans may be different. But our target is the same—Indian government. And our goal is freedom for Kashmir. First we want Kashmir to be freed. We are fighting for our right. So I don't see any harm in having good relations with other organisations demanding freedom from India.

As far as the lower level of the cadres was concerned, there were incidents of targeting each other. But not any more. We (the different militant organisations) have reached an understanding on this, and every incident of inter-group rivalry is taken serious note of and those responsible are punished. The JKLF and Hizbul Mujahideen, among other organisations, have a broad understanding about taking the movement forward.

Does it mean that JKLF will support Kashmir's merger with Pakistan?

I don't say that. It all depends on the people. They will be given complete freedom to decide in which direction they want to go. But JKLF is predominantly for a 'free Kashmir', including the PoK.

Will you accept the government's invitation for talks?

Yes. Provided Kashmir is treated as a 'third party', besides Pakistan and India. This is regarding our (the Kashmiri people's) fate. We will never be a party to any talks which are going to be held under the Indian Constitution. Please remember, we will agree to nothing less than freedom from India. I want to make it clear that all deliberations on Kashmir must include us (Kashmiris) and should be conducted under the supervision of the United Nations.

What is your reaction on Rajesh Pilot's move to hold elections in Jammu and Kashmir?

Here, in J&K [Jammu & Kashmir], only that election will take place which determines the 'independence' of the state—I mean, the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir. We will never settle for anything less than the whole state, as seen in the map.

Do you think that the militants can get the better of the Central forces and army stationed in the valley?

Why not? They are capable of killing only the common people. They don't dare to touch us. How do you think I am moving around as I like. We take it as a challenge. However by all this I don't mean any harm to 'Indians' or anyone else...

Will you elaborate on that?

What I mean is we have no enmity with India. Nor do we like tension between India and Pakistan. Kashmir has been a long-standing dispute between these two countries. The subcontinent will see peace only if Indo-Pak relations are normalised. That would require a permanent solution to the Kashmir problem.

What is your relationship with Pakistan? The U.S. has also recognised the fact that militants in Kashmir are receiving support from Pakistan.

Pakistan supports our cause. They give us moral support and recognise the fact that Kashmir is a disputed territory—and this so-called links just end there. We don't get any military help from Pakistan, as the Indian propaganda runs. Nor are we proxies for Pakistan.

Militancy in the valley has resulted in heavy exodus, of both Hindus and Muslims. What do you think they should do now?

They should return. In the first place nobody asked them to flee the valley. We were not against the Kashmiri Pandits or any other religious groups. The Sikhs and many Hindus are still here. It was the mischief of the

then Governor Jagmohan, who wanted to finish us (the movement) by clearing the area of all Hindus. But that backfired. In fact, I would appreciate if they (the migrants) join hands with us in our struggle. Why do they forget that they too are Kashmiris? Religion does not determine whether one is a Kashmiri or not.

What is your future course of action?

The OIC [Organization of Islamic Conference] resolution (supporting Kashmiri militants' move) has given us a boost. That shows international support is more forthcoming. But we want big powers like the U.S. to come forward.

Kashmiris Seen Increasingly Alienated

93AS0881E Cochin *THE WEEK* in English
16 May 93 pp 39-42

[Article by K.M. Rakesh and Ehsan Fazli: "Growing Alienation"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] As the temperature soared to a scorching 45 degrees in Delhi, Rajesh Pilot shifted uneasily in his seat. The reason for his discomfort, however, was another hot spot: Kashmir. On May 6, the vexed valley edged ominously closer towards a point of no return as a general strike crippled normal life that is already caught in the crossfire between the militants and the security forces. Pilot, who is in charge of the Kashmir cell in the home ministry, decided to jet to the trouble spot the next day.

The visit, though, was unlikely to improve matters much in the state. On September 2, President's rule in Kashmir will expire. The Constitution needs to be amended for a further extension. While Pilot is busy installing his own men at the helm of affairs in the troubled state with the sole aim of going ahead with his prestigious poll plans, life in the valley continues to be in the shadow of the gun—whether it be of the militants or the security forces.

Incidents of alleged atrocities by the Central forces have further alienated the people even as a completely disoriented state administration is struggling to find a foothold among the people. The latest round of 'excesses' by the security forces took place in the apple town of Sopore where more than 200 shops were gutted when the men in uniform allegedly set fire to the buildings. The securitymen had apparently torched the area in retaliation to the Hizbul Mujahideen's rocket attack on a Border Security Force [BSF] residential block.

While the state teetered on the brink, Central leaders continued their games of one-upmanship. A new set of advisers have already taken charge in the state. All of them are Pilot's men. Ashok Jaitley, Gen. M.A. Zaki and R.K. Sayeed have been appointed as advisers to Governor Gen. K.V. Krishna Rao. They replace Home Minister S.B. Chavan's nominees.

Even the security forces are not free of intra-party politics. Old Kashmir hand and a Pilot nominee D.D. Gupta takes over as inspector general of CRPF [Central Reserve Police Force]. There are changes in the state

police too, with M.A. Noomani set to become the additional director general (law and order). He will replace a Chavan favourite, M.N. Sabharwal. One more additional chief secretary is tipped to take charge soon. State DGP [Director General of Police] B.S. Bedi is also likely to be shunted, probably to Delhi. "Such is the intervention by the Centre. How do you think one can work effectively when we are moved around like puppets?" asked a senior officer from the state police cadre.

But while the administration gropes in the dark, the militants are making their moves without much ado. The Kul Jamaat Hurriyet Conference (KJHC) is just "two or three weeks away from completing the work on our constitution" according to Mirwaiz Umar Farooq of the Awami Action Committee. The constitutional committee appointed in January is headed by Justice Bahauddin Farooqui, former chief justice of the J&K [Jammu & Kashmir] High court.

"Once we have it, we can chalk out future programmes and direct the 'movement' to achieve our goals," says the 18-year-old Mirwaiz who succeeded his father Mirwaiz Maulana Mohammed Farooq who was assassinated two years ago.

The KJHC, which has the support of 26 political and religious groups, including students and employees organisations, has set its eyes on 'freedom' for Kashmir. "We do not support the gun culture. But there is a limit that a whole community can be stretched to," says the Mirwaiz.

There is a new determination among the militant outfits, as is evident from their coordinated moves. Even as the militant groups realised the futility of fighting each other, non-militant outfits have also recognised the importance of coming under one umbrella. "The JKLF [Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front] and the Hizbul Mujahideen have expressed their support to the conference. But they are not participants as our fight against the government is from two different points (political and military)," says the Mirwaiz.

Besides, there is the Tehrik-e-Hurriyet-e-Kashmir, a 13-party alliance of extreme right wing Islamic organisations. "We want Kashmir to be annexed by Pakistan, as that is the only Islamic nation having a common border with us," says Abu Ubaida, adviser of Tehrik-ul-Mujahideen. "Religion and geography does not allow us Kashmiris to be with India," he adds. The unity of these 13 organisations is based on Koranic guidelines. "First we are Muslims, then Kashmiris or anything else. To remain in the Islamic mainstream we have to join Pakistan," adds Ubaida.

The resolution passed at the recent Organisation of Islamic Countries session in Karachi recognising the cause of a 'free Kashmir' has given a boost to the militants and their supporters in the state. "We now look forward to real help from countries, especially Islamic ones, in solving the issue. Inshah Allah, we will pull through," says the Mirwaiz.

The anti-India organisations have hit upon a new strategy to impress international organisations like the U.N. "We do not want an Indo-Pak war," says Javed Ahmed Mir, the 31-year-old chief of the JKLF. Mirwaiz Farooq believes that "any tension between the two countries would be detrimental to peace on the subcontinent. Why can't the Indian government use the money spent on Kashmir for the benefit of its own poor?" he asks. The non-militant forces have also realised the need to bring Pakistan to the table and treat Kashmir as a 'third party' in talks to be held under the supervision of the UN.

The state's politicians too are making their moves, if only to garner support. The recent statements of Dr. Farooq Abdullah flaying the government for exacerbating the issue by indulging in 'atrocities' would help none but the anti-national outfits. A recent letter from the National Conference to the Governor urged the government to invite the militants for talks "without any preconditions". "We know that one day all these people would realise the crux of the Kashmir issue—and that is nothing but freedom from India," says the Mirwaiz.

Pushed to a corner, the administration is putting on a bravé front. "Where is the question of conceding their demand while the people are fed up of militancy?" asks Mehmood-ur-Rehman, additional chief secretary (home). He admits that the government's move to win back the misguided youth of the valley has not yielded appreciable results so far. "But we are confident of weaning them away from the militants," he adds.

Rahman, however, agrees that the alleged excesses by security forces can dash all hopes of a solution. "Any sort of excess in using force will certainly alienate the people. It has its own retarding effect," says Rahman.

Agrees a former divisional commissioner of Srinagar: "Peace may be possible, but normalcy is hard to achieve." He adds that the repeated moves by Central ministers, for whom Kashmir has become more of an image building exercise, has caused more harm than good.

The police agitation over the alleged death of a colleague in army custody only queered the pitch. All claims of cohesiveness in the police force proved to be wrong when the state's policemen literally trained their guns on the Central forces. The decision taken by the government on May 4 to dismiss the 79 policemen who struck work protesting the death of constable Riyaz Ahmad Ganai prompted a quick response from the police coordination committee which called for the May 6 general strike.

Though the policemen in the valley have resumed work, the cops in Srinagar are still on the warpath. Besides the arrest of Srinagar SSP K. Rajendra Kumar, they are demanding that their disbanded union be allowed to function again and the 500 cops dismissed in recent times be reinstated.

After the army took control of the police control room, which was the centre stage of the agitation on the night of April 27, the cops were subjected to an identification parade to find out whether any of them had terrorist connections. Militants in the custody of the army were brought at the parade site and asked to identify their acquaintances among the striking cops. Fourteen of the cops were detained after the parade.

"The situation in the valley has gone from bad to worse," says CRPF DIG [Deputy Inspector General] (operation) M.L. Guleria. "We (paramilitary forces) cannot do police duty, and when policemen agitate it is a very serious issue." Though he feels that the revolt by the policemen was a bad precedent, DGP B.S. Bedi believes that it will have no major consequence considering that only a few hundred of the 32,000-strong force took to the streets.

Bedi exudes confidence despite the recent setback. "The whole operation is under my command. We have almost daily coordination meetings, which is bringing in excellent results," he says. Bedi believes that the killing of Maqbool Ilahi, the divisional commander of the pro-Pakistan Hizbul Mujahideen, has turned the tide in favour of the authorities. "That was a big blow to the militants who never expected that we would strike."

With the shifting of the durbar to the summer capital Srinagar, the move against militancy is expected to intensify. That also raised fears among the people of raids by the paramilitary forces.

Quite understandable too. "My house has been searched several times, both by the army and the paramilitary. I know the difference. Armymen never treat us like animals," says a journalist of an Urdu daily.

The administration has been quick to assure the people that the forces would be asked to exercise utmost restraint during search operations. But says a shopkeeper in the busy Lal Chowk area: "We have been hearing this for the last four years. They are just sweet words."

The militants are making most of the growing public disenchantment with the administration. Most of them are having a free run in the valley. JKLF chief Javed Mir, in fact, never misses a Friday prayer at the Jama Masjid. But even as he jumps every security cordon with ease, the authorities maintain that the government does not want him to be harmed. That may be because the government needs him more at the moment. The JKLF is the only outfit which has so far not demanded the annexation of Kashmir by Pakistan.

No one seems quite sure about the future course of action in Kashmir. But the Centre, or at least the Rajesh Pilot camp, appears to be sure of one thing: that elections will be held somehow. Even a low voter turnout would be acceptable. The holding of elections would be a victory for many leaders. Even if the state is lost in the process.

Delhi Police Arrest 'Notorious Pakistan Spy' 18 Jun

BK2606110193 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English
20 Jun 93 5

[Text] New Delhi—The Crime Branch of Delhi Police on Friday arrested a notorious Pakistani spy of Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) from Old Delhi railway station even as the agent was en route to Gorakhpur by Shaheed Express.

Addressing a press conference, Police Commissioner M.B. Kaushal said Mohammed Sharief, involved in several cases of bomb blasts and terrorist and subversive activities, was arrested while he was checking his AC two-tier reservation at around 8.45 pm.

Kaushal said the agent initially disclosed his name as Pawan Kumar Sharma and tried to prove his credentials by producing his passport and a driving licence. However, a search of his belongings—a brown suitcase—led to the recovery of a hand-written poster in Urdu, inciting Muslims to take up arms against India and cipher codes.

Mohd [Mohammad] Sharief was on the wanted list of Interpol and CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] had moved extradition proceedings against him. Crime Branch DCP [Deputy Commissioner of Police] Neeraj Kumar said CBI had sent a lookout circular for Mohd Sharief on March 25 1993.

Following his arrest, Kaushal said, the ISI agent was subjected to joint interrogation by CBI and the Crime Branch. During interrogation, the spy revealed his name as Mohd Sharief alias Manzoor Ahmed alias Akbar alias Manjit Singh alias Pawan Sharma.

Mohd Sharief, hailing from Han Ke Naul village in Kasur district near Lahore (Pakistan), currently resided at a government flat at 43-D, Chauburji, Garden Estate in Lahore. Employed as an assistant accounts officer with the Agriculture Department of Punjab Government in Pakistan, he was presently on leave, said Kaushal.

Kaushal said Mohd Sharief had been working for both ISI and the military intelligence and had been close to Pakistan's Jammat-e-Islami leaders, including Amir-ul-Azam and Sajjad Ahmed Raza. According to Kumar, Mohd Sharief had previously visited India on four occasions, his first operational visit being in January-February, 1991. He had escorted Lal Singh alias Manjit Singh, prime suspect in the Kanishka bombing case, to Aligarh via Calcutta and introduced him to local Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) activists as well as Punjab and Kashmiri terrorists such as Javed Yusuf.

At Aligarh, Operation K2—bringing together Punjab and Kashmiri terrorists with Muslim fundamentalist groups such as SIMI—was set in motion to manage joint operations and work towards the balkanisation of India.

The DCP said Jamaat propaganda secretary Amir-ul-Azam and Muzzaffarabad-based chief of K2 Sajjad Ahmed Raza were also present at the meeting at Aligarh.

Kumar said Mohd Sharief had been frequenting Nepal too on intelligence missions. He visited Nepal in September 1991 and then in June 1992, not only to recruit local Nepali citizens for espionage but also to find easy entry to India.

A case under the Official Secret Act, Foreigners Act and under section 468/471/153-A IPC has been registered. Mohd Sharief was produced by CBI in Tiz Hazari courts on Saturday afternoon where the duty magistrate remanded him to police custody for seven days. Sharief will be produced in the courts again on June 27.

Article Considers Issues of Kashmir, Proliferation
BK2906072893 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English
24 Jun 93 p 8

[By Arati R. Jerath: "The Kashmir dispute"]

[Text] By giving the Kashmir dispute a nuclear trigger, Pakistan has succeeded in putting this long-dormant issue back on the international agenda. After more than two decades, the world community is looking at Kashmir again and expressing a concern to which India has yet to formulate an adequate response.

The tendency to knee-jerk reactions is typified by the shrill outburst that greeted the recent comments made by the United States Interim Director for South Asia, John Malott, on the human rights situation in the Kashmir Valley. Unfortunately, the hysteria has completely obscured the need to realistically assess the pressures that are operating on India and hammer out a domestic consensus to deal with them. The harsh truth is that today, Kashmir is India's Achilles' heel and the flak we are receiving internationally on the human rights issue will only increase unless it is countered more effectively than with touch-me-not mulishness.

The pressures are essentially from two sources—the Organisation of Islamic Countries [OIC] and the Western bloc led by the United States. It is perhaps a measure of the establishment's refusal to face realities that the latter is viewed with a jaundiced eye despite its overall support to the Indian position on Kashmir while the disturbing signals coming from the former are blithely ignored.

Kashmir has figured in every OIC resolution for the past two years and the latest one, passed at the ministerial meeting in Karachi, hinted at sanctions to pressurise India on the human rights front. In fact, the Karachi meet should have been an eye-opener as Pakistan was joined by traditional friends of India like the United Arab Emirates in the diatribe on Kashmir.

India's response to OIC criticism is typical of its ostrich-like behaviour on this sensitive issue. Each resolution is

stripped and analysed to derive comfort from any little sign that Pakistani manoeuvrings have not met with total success. Words of support whispered in private meetings with member governments of the OIC are touted as evidence that the resolutions are meaningless. There is little or no effort to evolve a strategy to tackle the growing gulf between India and the OIC on the issue.

Unfortunately, the OIC's line on Kashmir is linked to domestic happenings in India. Quite clearly the increasingly strident tone adopted by the OIC on human rights violations by Indian security forces in the Valley has its roots in the Ayodhya crisis and the consequent communal divide which a frail polity seems unable to bridge.

Just as the Non-Aligned Movement gave international legitimacy to the Palestinian cause, it would be foolish for India to ignore the possibility of a 54-member body like the OIC, with its acknowledged susceptibility to *gaumi* [national] pressures, being swept by the tide of history into canvassing for support for the Kashmiris. Today, Israel, battered and bruised by four decades of relentless criticism on human rights abuse among other charges, has been dragged to the negotiating table by none other than its mentor, the United States. There is perhaps a lesson for India in this.

Western pressures, on the other hand, are more cut and dry. The interest in Kashmir is linked to the larger concern of nuclear non-proliferation, as Malott himself admitted in his controversial address at the India International Centre during his visit last month. This is where the Pakistani tactic of admitting its nuclear capability has paid dividends. To the extent that they send tensions soaring, the Kashmir dispute and the resultant problems of human rights abuse and state-sponsored terrorism are of interest.

Instead of crying wolf when human rights are mentioned, the Government needs to address itself seriously to the item heading the US agenda for South Asia today—non-proliferation. In discussions with their Indian counterparts, U.S. officials have continually stressed, not a solution to the Kashmir problem or an agreement to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT] as is commonly believed here, but the need for India and Pakistan to thrash out a regional arrangement for nuclear restraint. They have been prodding India to place its security concerns on the table and list the measures it is ready to adopt with the eventual aim of capping nuclear capabilities in the region. India must respond adequately.

Several ideas have been batted around by analysts both here and in the United States. These include a no-first-use agreement by India, Pakistan and China, a regional cut-off in the production of fissile material and an agreement to stop nuclear detonations. None of these compromise India's position on the NPT or envisage giving up the nuclear option without adequate safeguards for national security.

The advantages of engaging Washington in substantive dialogue on its fundamental concerns are amply illustrated by Beijing's dealings with the United States. China has once again been extended the Most Favoured Nation status despite all the muscle-flexing in the United States on its dismal human rights record mainly because Washington cannot afford to jeopardise its substantial economic and commercial dealings with Beijing.

On the human rights front, greater transparency can only help India, both domestically and internationally. It is worth noting that last year's discussions with Amnesty International representatives helped to sensitise the organisation to the atrocities by militants in the Kashmir Valley. This year's Amnesty report for the first time acknowledges the abuse of human rights by terrorists. Regular interaction of this nature is more likely to blunt criticism than invite it, thereby strengthening India's stand that it is a democracy fully committed to protect human rights.

Internal Affairs

Jyoti Basu Blamed

93AS0762A *Calcutta BARTAMAN* in Bengali
6 Apr 93 p 4

[Editorial: "Subhas Ghising's Accusation"]

[Text] The Jyoti Basu-Subhas Ghising meeting in the hills has been fruitless. Both the leaders have openly expressed their respective differences of opinion after emerging from heated discussions. The possibility of straightening out their differences is remote. The Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) planned their schedule with a renewed gusto before the arrival of Jyoti Basu. At the general body meeting of the Gorkha Hill Council on 31 March, presided over by Subhas Ghising, it was decided that the Hill Council would be returned to the Center. All the Hill Council money, demand for finances, debts, office employees, even the Council Headquarters Lal Kuthi [as published] would be handed over to the Center. This decision simply means that the Gorkha Hill Council will be dissolved. This decision should not be taken lightly, since the decision was made at the general meeting. Resignations by GNLF councilors would have led to the Council's demise. Jyoti Basu went to the hills to try to change the intent of this decision. He even announced before his departure from Calcutta that he would sanction the legitimate dues of the Hill Council. He said at the Dum Dum airport that Rs. [Rupees] 1.2 billion have already been given to the Hill Council and the state government would shortly release Rs. 1.9 billion. Subhas Ghising repeatedly alleged that they were improperly treated on money matters. He even said that the Jyoti Basu government is continuing an economic blockade against the Hill Council, and the workings of the Council have come to a standstill for that reason. In this situation, there is no logic behind the maintenance of this Council. So far, Jyoti Basu has not responded to this allegation. He did not explain what the

real situation is. But Mr. Basu became agitated the moment the GNLF decided to launch the Darjeeling movement. Almost overnight, he has promised to give a total of Rs. 3.1 billion to the Hill Council. This announcement would have reaped good results if it had been released a week ago. Now it is too late. Because, Subhas Ghising said in refined language, before that the state government arranged to starve the Hill Council within one year of its formation. The state government did not give the amount it was supposed to offer; moreover, it is blocking the money from the Center. Subhas Ghising has held three ministers responsible for this—Jyoti Basu, Buddhadev Bhattacharya, and Ashok Bhattacharya. According to Subhas Ghising, the state government owes Rs. 695.5 million to the Hill Council. In addition, Ghising has another allegation. They are not only being starved to death, but also being tortured. It is alleged that the CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist] and the police jointly are beating up Hill Council people. The head of the Hill Council has been arrested after being detained on phoney charges. In Ghising's language, "Enmity is being expressed toward the Council." Jyoti Basu did not solve these. On the contrary, he took the dias and said in his own inimitable way indifferent words about GNLF. He said at the Chowk Bazar on Sunday, Jyoti Basu said, "The GNLF leaders do not study. They brand Nepali as a foreign language. Strange argument." After such innuendoes, the chief minister also mentioned, the GNLF could not achieve anything even after obtaining the [district] Hill Council. They have wasted the money frivolously. Now they want to create trouble. The chief minister has avoided the main question, though he has indulged himself in slanted remarks, asking whether or not it is true that the state government blocked the Hill Council dues and if they did, why? Maybe, Subhas Ghising could not manage the affairs properly. Perhaps he has many faults and failures. But the people of Darjeeling would judge that. They would be able to express their opinion during the elections. But the chief minister of West Bengal has a different responsibility. Jyoti Basu shares the same responsibility as Subhas Ghising in ensuring the success of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council—speedy progress of the hill development works, some redressal of the people's problems. Moreover, if the state government had stopped the payment of the Hill Council money, then it would be pointless to hold Subhas Ghising responsible for that. If the Council has been financially ignored since 1990, then there is no gain in holding them responsible for not doing any work. It is true that Subhas Ghising wants to stir the hornet's nest by raising the slogan of a separate Gorkhaland. But his allegations against the state government should also be probed. Jyoti Basu and his people should speak out about whether they treated the Hill Council properly. One-way blaming would only make things complicated. There may still be opportunity for solving the dispute on the basis of facts. The state government has to reveal the truth.

Ghising Threatening CPM

93AS0762B *Calcutta BARTAMAN* in Bengali
5 Apr 93 p 5

[Unattributed article: "Jyoti Basu Will Be Responsible If There is an Outburst"]

[Text] Staff Reporter, Darjeeling: The hills are going to be aflame with trouble. The summary of the proposal accepted at the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council meeting on Wednesday and the speeches of the Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) members is that the tripartite agreement among the Center, State and the GNLF is dead. The Hill Council is dead too. No more Council. We are going back on our old demand. We want a separate Gorkhaland, but remaining within the Indian Constitution. What this U-turn after four and a half years? The answer was given in that meeting also. Everybody, including Subhas Ghising, remarked that they were compelled to abandon the Hill Council of the antagonistic attitude of Jyoti Basu and the State Government. He and his party have been harassing them in such a way as if they are from Pakistan. So they will be responsible for the fire that will be kindled in the coming days. Last time, Jyoti Basu as well as the CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist] were thoroughly embarrassed when the hills were all aflame over the demand of a separate Gorkhaland. From the administrative point of view, the state government could do nothing to protect the lives and properties of the people. Even Jyoti Basu failed to save his cadres' lives. The Hill Council was gliding smoothly in the beginning. But trouble started in the nineties. What is the point of friction? It has been noted that 19 ministries were supposed to be handed over to the Council; most of these have not been. The Council should have gotten ministries like public health, hospital, and so on. But the state government has not given the Council anything even after four years. Even then the task of inspection remained in the hands of the district's health official who is not under the Council. The scenario is the same in education. The biggest problem was the finances of the Hill Council. It was found, the state government was harassing the Council for a long time on the pretext of "embargo" while it owed Rs. [Rupees] 695.5 million to the Council. Though there might be an embargo on some state government expenses, it was not supposed to be imposed on money given by the Center, because the state government is like a post office in the matter. But the state government stopped the payment of money given by the Center in 1990-91, 91-92, and 92-93 fiscal years. Ghising appealed many times. At the end, he went to Delhi along with MP [member of Parliament] Inderjit and related his allegation to S.B. Chavan and to many others. Inderjit raised the issue in Parliament. The Central Government requested the state to release the money, especially the amount given by the Center. But there were no results. On the other hand, besides this financial blockade, other issues increased the GNLF-CPM animosity. To avenge the torture the CPM experienced during the days of the Gorkhaland movement, the administration, as well as

the CPM, started attacking the GNLF much in the style of the plains. Even the GNLF councillors were also arrested extensively. The extent of hate the GNLF harbors against CPM and the government, especially Jyoti Basu, Buddhadev Bhattacharya, and Ashok Bhattacharya was evident at the general council meeting. The session continued from 1500 to 1730. All through, Ghising as well as other councillors showered bitter hatred against them, citing various incidents. And they even said that the GNLF is compelled to raise the Gorkhaland demand because of these individuals. That the state government was so long deliberately playing the Hill Council in a long rope was proved at that session by the surrendering attitude of the state government's representative. Amitava Mukherjee, the state government representative, told Ghising at the session, "I brought Rs. 50 million with me. And the rest of the dues of the Central Government money would arrive within a couple of days. And the 'embargo' on the state government dues are also being lifted. You will get the money within a few days." He requested Ghising not to wind up the existence of the Hill Council. "Continue your work." The allocation of other departments would be compromised with the state government after discussion. Ghising replied with an attitude that verbal assurances alone about finances will not work. "Have you gotten any documents?" Ghising said in a royal style after interrupting Amitava quite frequently. "Place all the money on the table before the Treasury closes. Only then will I consider changing my decision. No more honeymoon." Now the question is, on 29 March Ghising fixed the deadline of 31 March. If it were really hard to give money, why did the Government surrender so quickly promising that all the dues would be cleared within a couple of days.

Supreme Court Stays Madhya Pradesh Verdict

93AS0842A *Madras THE HINDU* in English
17 Apr 93 p 1

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] New Delhi, April 16—The Supreme Court today granted interim stay of operation of the judgment of the Jabalpur Bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court quashing the Presidential proclamation of December 15 dismissing the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] Government. The stay was granted pending disposal of the appeal filed by the Centre against the High Court judgment.

The Presidential proclamation under Article 356, also dissolved the State Assembly.

The Bench consisting of Mr. Justice S. Ratnaveil Pandian, Dr. Justice T.K. Thommen and Dr. Justice A.S. Anand issued notice to the respondents (who were petitioners before the M.P. High Court).

Two other cases: The Bench also directed that this appeal and three other connected appeals from the Centre (against the same judgment of the M.P. High Court) be

tagged on to two cases which were placed about three years ago before a nine-judge bench of the Apex Court (involving *inter alia* the question of interpretation of Article 356 of the Constitution).

Article 356 deals with provisions (relating to imposition of President's rule in case of failure of Constitutional machinery in States).

(Of the two cases before the nine-judge Bench, one case was from Mr. S.R. Bommai, former Chief Minister of Karnataka, relating to question of validity or otherwise of Presidential proclamation issued under Article 356 dismissing the then Karnataka Government about three years ago. Another case related to a similar question concerning the validity of the Presidential proclamation issued sometime ago under Article 356 dismissing the then Nagaland Government which was then headed by Mr. Vamuzo.)

The Bench gave liberty to the parties to file additional documents within 10 days.

The Bench issued notice to the Attorney-General (AG), Mr. Milon K. Banerjee—who was present in the Court—and accepted the notice.

The Bench, in view of the urgency of the matter and importance of the questions involved, directed the Court registry to place the matter before the Chief Justice for fixing an early date of hearing of the case before an appropriate Bench.

The Bench also gave liberty to the parties to make a 'mention' before the Chief Justice.

Earlier, Messrs Ram Jethmalani and Shanti Bhushan, senior counsel (appearing for Mr. Sunderlal Patwa, former BJP Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, whose Government was dismissed by the December 15 Presidential proclamation) urged that they should be given liberty to move an application for vacating orders of 'interim stay'.

At this, the Bench orally observed that it was always open for a party to move an appropriate application before the court seeking a required relief under relevant provision of law.

The Bench also stayed all further proceedings in any High Court in cases involving substantially similar questions of law (on the scope and interpretation of Article 356 of the Constitution).

Transferred: The Bench transferred to the Apex Court the writ petitions pending before the High Courts of Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh against the Presidential proclamations of December 15 last dismissing BJP State Governments led by Messrs Bhairon Singh, Shekhawat and Shanta Kumar, respectively.

The Bench passed these orders when Mr. Arun Jaitley, senior counsel brought to its (Court's) notice of the 'petitions' already filed in the Apex Court by Messrs

Bhairon Singh Shekhawat and Shanta Kumar seeking 'transfer' to the Apex Court of their writ petitions.

Miss A. Subhashini, senior Central Government counsel accepted notice for Union of India in these matters while Messrs B. Datta and Aruneshwar Gupta accepted notices for the States of Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Earlier, Mr. K. Parasaran, former Attorney-General appearing for the Centre (appellant in the Madhya Pradesh matter) submitted that some time ago two cases involving the scope and the interpretation of Article 356 of the Constitution were directed to be posted before a nine-judge Bench of the court.

He also submitted that the present appeal against the M.P. High Court judgment indisputably raised substantial questions of law.

At this, Mr. Ram Jethmalani pleaded that there should be 'no stay' of the M.P. High Court judgment.

Mr. Shanti Bhushan, while opposing the plea for 'stay' of the M.P. High Court judgment submitted that the matter required expeditious hearing by the Apex Court.

Prime Minister Rao Rules Out Midterm Poll

93AS0844A Bombay THE SUNDAY TIMES OF INDIA in English 18 Apr 93 pp 1, 8

[Text] Nagpur, April 17—The Prime Minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, today ruled out mid-term parliamentary elections and said no decision had been taken on polls to four states where BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] governments were dismissed in the aftermath of Ayodhya incidents.

To the question on the possibility of early elections in the four erstwhile BJP-ruled states, Mr Rao said the government had called for reports from the governors of the four states. However, he refused to comment on a time frame to hold elections in the four states. "We are in the process of taking a final decision and you will hear an announcement soon," he said.

The Prime Minister said his government had received reports from the home ministry and election commission on the holding of elections in these states, but it was yet to get the reports from the state governments concerned. President's rule in these states is to end in the second week of June.

Addressing reporters briefly at Nagpur airport before leaving by helicopter for Wadsa-Desaiganj in Gadchiroli district, Mr Narasimha Rao said he had told the Pakistan Prime Minister that he "must help India in bringing the Memon brothers involved in the Bombay blasts to book."

The Prime Minister said he was raising the issue of terrorism in every country he visited because international cooperation in checking the problem was necessary. India did not even have extradition treaties with

many countries, he pointed out, adding that such a treaty with the United Kingdom was in the final stages of formulation.

The Prime Minister urged tribals not to fall prey to the guiles of Naxalites.

While launching the 242-km Gondia-Chanda gauge conversion project of the South-Eastern Railway at Wadsa-Desaiganj in the tribal district of Gadchiroli, 120 km from here, Mr Rao said the Naxalites were misleading the tribals, posing as their benefactors. Persons armed with guns can never bring about any progress, he remarked.

The minister of state for railways, Mr K.C. Lenka, presided over the function that was attended by the Maharashtra chief minister, Mr Sharad Pawar, human resources development minister, Mr Arjun Singh, the power minister Mr N.K.P. Salve and the water resources minister, Mr V.C. Shukla.

The Prime Minister said the long-cherished economic co-operation among SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] countries is in emergence. The decision to create an economic bloc to further the ties on economic development among the member-countries was taken at the recently held SAARC meeting in Bangladesh.

Later, the Prime Minister arrived at Pandaria in Madhya Pradesh on a day's visit to the Chhattisgarh region.

Paper's Analyst Discusses Sharif's Dismissal

93AS0841A Madras *THE HINDU* in English
19 Apr 93 p 1

[Article by K.K. Katyal]

[Text] New Delhi, April 18—The way things were moving in Pakistan of late, it had to happen. The ouster of the Prime Minister, Mr Nawaz Sharif, had been on the cards, given the sharpening confrontation with the President, Mr. Gulam Ishaq Khan. It became inevitable after Mr. Sharif's public indictment of the President in a broadcast to the nation last night.

In the troika, constituting the ruling establishment in Pakistan, two sides that is the President and the Armed Forces had combined against the third, the Prime Minister. If he did not have the support of the army, Mr. Khan would not—could not—have proceeded against Mr. Sharif. A realist that he was, Mr. Sharif obviously anticipated his dismissal. His last night's broadcast was a calculated political move. By blaming the President for acting against a duly elected Government, Mr. Sharif sought to project himself as the champion of Parliamentary democracy as against the extra parliamentary role of the President. Mr. Sharif thus adopted a platform which his opponents like Ms Benazir Bhutto would find hard to oppose. For had she not been calling for the curtailment of the President's extraordinary powers—vesting in him

through the controversial Eighth Amendment of the Constitution of which she was a victim not long ago?

No surprise: Mr. Khan's decision to install a caretaker civilian government was no surprise either. It showed that the army was averse to the idea of taking over the administration directly, but would like to call the shots from behind the facade of the civilian rule.

There is no reason for India to derive comfort from the political turmoil in Pakistan. Any instability in the neighbouring country is a cause of concern here. The bilateral relations during Mr. Sharif's tenure had touched a new low, but Mr. Khan was a bigger hawk when it came to dealing with India. In 1989 he told the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi during a visit to Islamabad to take steps to dispel the impression of Indian hegemony in the region. And recently, in his address to the national assembly he referred to the Ayodhya incident in a manner considered highly objectionable in India.

During my visit to Pakistan in February, two points were clear. One of the issues concerning the forthcoming Presidential election would dominate the political scene in the months ahead. Two the Prime Minister and the President were inexorably moving towards a confrontation. The shape and timing of the clash was not clear—it came earlier than was expected. The recent events accelerated the pace. The president called Mr. Sharif the other day and told him to address what were regarded genuine problems. More important, a statement from the President's house made known, somewhat curtly, what Mr. Khan had told Mr. Sharif. The tone and substance of Mr. Sharif's broadcast last night sealed his fate. That is because under the present dispensation—under the Eighth Amendment bequeathed by the late Gen. Zia-Ul-Haq—the President is empowered to dismiss the Prime Minister and dissolve the National Assembly. These powers were invoked twice in the past—once when Gen. Zia dismissed Junejo Government and later when Ms. Benazir Bhutto was packed off unceremoniously. The difference between now and the last phase was that Mr. Sharif was a beneficiary of the Presidential action then, a victim now.

Gorkhaland: GNLF Adopting Threatening Posture

93AS0809C Bangalore *DECCAN HERALD* in English
21 Apr 93 p 8

[Article by K.S. Dakshina Murthy: "Stir Threat by GNLF Causes Tension"; italicized words as published]

[Text] A mood of cynicism envelops the Darjeeling hills where the Gorkha National Liberation Front [GNLF] is threatening another agitation at a time when the summer resort is still recovering from the ravages of the violent mayhem that shook the region nearly five years ago.

An element of uncertainty prevails in the region, where the time is now crucial for the local economy. The tourist season is just commencing, while plucking has begun for

the first crop of internationally renowned tea leaves. There will either be another wave of violence or peace will prevail. The date set for the proposed agitation is April 30.

Meanwhile, the GNLF chief Subhash Ghising has been holding talks with the West Bengal Government and the Centre. The bone of contention is the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council [DGHC], the autonomous body created by a tripartite agreement amongst the GNLF, the West Bengal Government and the Centre in August 1988.

While Mr. Ghising, who is also the chairman of the DGHC, is demanding the formation of a separate State comprising areas now under the DGHC, the Jyoti Basu-led Left Front Government is opposing it tooth and nail.

The DGHC is an autonomous body covering the three hill subdivisions of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong besides certain forest areas within Siliguri Sub-division. The DGHC in turn comes under the West Bengal Government.

Mr. Ghising's contention is that the DGHC is not armed with adequate powers to run the region, and has accused West Bengal to wilfully holding back finances to the DGHC. On the other hand, the CPM leaders in Calcutta do not consider the demand of statehood as justified, and say that the State Government did not release finances to the DGHC as the GNLF-controlled body did not produce utilisation certificates of finances received earlier by it.

Troubled Existence

The DGHC has had a troubled existence ever since its formation. In 1990, Mr. Ghising pointed out several lacunae in the DGHC Act. Later, the GNLF chief declared the DGHC as a "no-man's land" on the grounds that the region had not been constitutionally incorporated into the country. The council was made defunct when Mr. Ghising closed 18 of its departments calling it a "glorified panchayat" with no powers.

On grounds of non-submission of Utilisation certificates, the West Bengal Government in 1990 turned off the flow of funds to the DGHC, amounting to nearly Rs 70 crore. This is being used by the GNLF as the main plank to justify its demand for a separate State.

Further, two ministers of the Jyoti Basu Government are understood to have attempted to interfere in the working of the DGHC bypassing the normal channels of protocol, in the process antagonising Mr. Ghising. On March 31 this year, Mr. Ghising engineered a resolution in the DGHC which proposed its own dissolution, and set a 30-day deadline for it to formally come into effect. Ten days are left for the deadline to expire, and if no compromise is arrived at, the GNLF will resume its agitation for a separate State.

GNLF Councillor Deepak Gurung told this correspondent in Darjeeling that the agitation would be peaceful

unlike the earlier stir. Essentially, it will be a "war of wits", he said, adding that the agitation would be only on paper and in discussions with the Centre and the West Bengal Government. Apparently, Mr. Ghising has indicated to his councillors that whatever moves the DGHC takes now must be cautious, as a wrong step at this stage could blot the GNLF's reputation amongst its followers in the hills.

The entire scenario unfolding in Darjeeling is still unclear. While his opponents in the region say that the GNLF is adopting a threatening posture just to get into a strong bargaining position for more powers to the council, those close to Mr. Ghising insist he is serious, but no one is sure, as Mr. Ghising is known to be unpredictable.

Confusion

During the first week of this month, when West Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu visited Darjeeling to address a rally of the Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI), a meeting was also scheduled between him and Mr. Ghising. But, the GNLF chief refused to meet him, and said he would deal directly with the Centre. Soon after, however, Mr. Ghising changed his mind, and met the Chief Minister. Later, when preparations were on full swing for the agitation, the Gorkha chief once again met Mr. Basu in Calcutta, and then had a *tete-a-tete* with Central leaders in Delhi.

The resolution adopted by the DGHC seeking to dissolve itself is being viewed with a certain amount of confusion. For, according to the CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist], the DGHC does not have powers to dissolve itself. So, given this, the constitutional position of the DGHC in the context of the resolution is not clear.

Mr. Ghising's opponents in Darjeeling attempt to brush aside his threats. According to Mr. R.B. Rai, the CPM's Rajya Sabha MP from the area, Mr. Ghising has taken on an aggressive posture as he is losing the following he commanded at the height of the agitation for Gorkhaland. In the CPM view, a periodic agitation ensures that the GNLF chief retains his hold over the organisation.

Pressure is also on Mr. Ghising from a newly-floated organisation, the Gorkha Democratic Front which was formed last year. This group does not recognise the DGHC, and instead has resolved to fight for a separate State with legislative powers. Its leader Mr. Madan Tamang told *Deccan Herald* that the DGHC was the "biggest hoax of the century", and was not different from the Hill Development Council that already existed for the region.

Meanwhile, a team of senior officers led by West Bengal Chief Secretary N. Krishnamurthy is scheduled to visit Darjeeling on April 22 for discussions with Mr. Ghising. If the talks are successful, Mr. Ghising will visit Calcutta

on April 25 to meet Mr. Jyoti Basu, and if a solution is arrived at, the DGHC will not dissolve itself.

Commentary Laments Free Hand of Militant Shiv-Sena

93AS0809B Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
21 Apr 93 p 8

[Article by Ashok Mitra: "The Hangal Episode and Shades of the Third Reich; By the Government's Courtesy"; italicized words as published]

[Text] Is it not time to re-read the dog-eared copies of Edgar Mowrer and William Shirer? The episode in Bombay involving A.K. Hangal, the film personality, has an eerie resemblance to events which used to take place, with dull monotonousness, 60-odd years ago, during the last days of the Weimer Republic in Germany.

The Nazis came to power by cocking the snook at the established Government. They systematically destroyed order and took the law in their own hands. Every time they perpetrated an outrage, President Hindenburg, tired and doddering, merely looked on, goading Adolf Hitler and his storm-troopers into perpetrating bigger outrages. The praetorian guards of the lawfully established government would make themselves even further scarce. That was the way to democracy's dusty death.

There's No Ban

Has it been any different in Bombay? Hangal received an invitation from the Pakistan Consul-General to attend the National Day celebrations of that country. Diplomatic relations with Pakistan have not been cut off; our Government has not warned countrymen to stay away from the vicinity of either the High Commission of Pakistan in New Delhi or the Consulate in Bombay.

Even after the explosions of March 12, both the High Commissioner of Pakistan in New Delhi and the Consul-General in Bombay have attended *iftar* parties to which they were invited by Indian citizens; Indian citizens, in their turn, have attended *iftar* parties arranged by the High Commissioner and the Consul-General. The Pakistan Day reception in New Delhi was attended by our officials as well as by leaders of several political parties, including the President of the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP].

None of these were relevant data for the Siva Sena supremo, Bal Thackeray. He is determined to experiment with the limits of presumptuous power; he is also interested in exploring the depth of impotence of established authority. Have not his storm-troopers got away with the systematic murders and pillage they organised in December and then, on a more ambitious scale, in January?

Mr. Thackeray has been in a cocky frame of mind, and with reason, since then. Whoever amongst Indian citizens dared to attend the Pakistan Day function, he

decided, must meet with retributive justice. Persons from Bombay's film world were picked out for punishment. A.K. Hangal was amongst the chosen ones. No Bombay cinema hall, spake Bal Thackeray, must exhibit any film which had Hangal in it. Siva Sena hoodlums broke into, in dog day afternoon, picture houses in Dadar and Mahim and Prabhadevi and Mahalaxmi and disrupted shows of even films where Hangal had only a bit part.

It was an exact replica of the *Schwarze Koprs* performances in Germany in the early 1930s: whomever the Nazis took a dislike to had his profession confiscated. As in the Weimar Republic six decades ago, so too in Bombay in the 46th year of the sovereign socialist secular democratic republic of India. The film exhibitors came to their heels in no time.

They agreed either (a) not to exhibit any Hangal film, or (b) to clip out, continuity be damned, all Hangal bits from films which, for compelling commercial reasons, they would find it difficult to totally exclude from exhibition. The arrangements were not hush-hush; the terms settled with the Siva Sena were publicly announced. What has not been divulged is whether the exhibitors have, in addition, agreed to hand over some hefty hush money to the Thackeray Youth.

The most remarkable thing about the episode is that both the Government of Maharashtra and the Union Government have maintained the lowest possible profile during these goings-on. It is apparently a cosy, private, bilateral arrangement between the film exhibitors and the Siva Sena. The governments, in Bombay as well as New Delhi, could not apparently care less about the details of the arrangement; they have, you should know, other concerns, such as keeping tracks of the Memons on the run. Has it not been dinned into their ears by the votaries of liberalisation that the least government is the best government? Decisions, they must have convinced themselves, are to be left to the market, with no meddling on the part of authority.

Old man Hindenburg and his ministers used nearly identical arguments in the dying days of their regime: bully boys would be bully boys, the government should shun involvement in their exuberant doings. The Nazis were delighted beyond measures. They took the hint and proceeded from little mayhem to big and bigger ones, until it was time for effecting the final *coup de grace* that would kill democracy in Germany. So it would be, P.V. Narasimha Rao and his party and his government have decided, in India.

Passivity

People like Hangal are accordingly left to fight it out on their own. In case they suffer from a feeling that they have been aggrieved and some or any of their fundamental rights have been interfered with by up-and-coming fascists, well, they and their friends are welcome to go to court. Unlike Pakistan, we believe in

the rule of law in this country; it is not for nothing that we are described as the largest democracy in the world.

The design of passivity is becoming clearer with every day. A full four months after the Ayodhya demolition, the authorities organise a few feeble raids here and there, seize some documents, arrest a few persons, who are let out on bail in no time. Of the one hundred thousand or more rowdies who participated in that grossly criminal act, the Government, even after four months, have not been able to identify even one, for not one prosecution has been launched. It is perhaps a question as much of subterranean admiration of the deed done as of cool electoral arithmetic.

Scratch the Prime Minister's mind, as one could have urged to scratch, 60-odd years ago, President Hindenburg's mind. The boys belonging to the Hitler Youth went a bit too far, conceivably that was how Hindenburg put it across to himself, but they had a point. The Viswa Hindu Parishad [VHP] crowd too have gone a bit too far, must be the current musing of the Indian Prime Minister; they have caused him some personal embarrassment, but they had a point to make: this great country, after all, is Rama country. Besides, elections have to be fought, sooner or later, in the four Aryavarta States.

Not Concerned

In the circumstances, is not discretion the better part of valour? If the Siva Sena chooses to go on the rampage in Bombay, that was not the Prime Minister's direct concern; let the Maharashtra Chief Minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, take care of it. Mr. Pawar must also have meanwhile chiselled to his own satisfaction a rational of do-nothingness.

Whether you acknowledge it openly or not, Mr. Thackeray is Bombay's uncrowned king; you cannot even make first base if he is inimical toward you; so please pretend that none has carried any tale to you about the Siva Sena's rampaging; you do not go to the movies and have not heard of Hangal or what treatment has been meted out to him.

Besides, the Maharashtra Chief Minister is a seasoned politician; if any action ought to be taken against Mr. Thackeray, why, let the Prime Minister himself, or the Union Home Minister—with whom the Maharashtra Chief Minister is not, if reports are to be believed, exactly on the best of terms—do the needful; on such grave affairs of the State, why should you expect the humble Chief Minister of a modest State like Maharashtra to take the initiative?

Be that as it may, the authorities, in New Delhi as much as in Bombay, have maintained a Sphinx-like silence over the Hangal affair, as if the alleged incident is a *maya*, and, even if it were not, the Government is not involved.

To the big, wide, outside world, the official stance of non-involvement will convey a particular message. Not

that the Western governments will be overly concerned with the very real prospect of fascism gradually capturing the ramparts of power in India which the Hangal episode connotes. Latin America and West Asia illustrate the point, the West do not mind either military dictators or fascists, they can be lived with, even the fundamentalists of Iran are now livable with, Saddam Hussain is only an aberration. A fascist India might not be an altogether cheerful cup of tea, but if its leaders are amenable to directives from Washington, a sensible deal could easily be struck.

Unfortunately, the Hangal episode beams another signal, strong and clear. The rule of law, it suggests, does not operate any more in India; musclemen rule the roost in the country's industrial and commercial capital even. In the circumstances, the Prime Minister's hortatory statements, such as he made a few days ago in Bangkok, will carry little weight with potential foreign investors. It cannot be said that the latter are weaving fantasies based on the prejudices of their mind.

They too must be noticing the downward trend in Indian share prices. Even more significantly, they must have been informed that, whatever the predilections of the Prime Minister and his party, fascism too is most unlikely to have an easy passage in India.

Should the authorities give in to the Siva Sena—and the Bharatiya Janata Party—to any excessive extent, that would be prelude to a civil war in the country, the tenuous compromises which India is would disintegrate if the Hangal experiment is sought to be repeated on a wide enough scale in different parts of the country; even were the Government to stay mute, incensed people, determined not to let fascism pass, would organise protests, which might well take increasingly violent forms. No foreign investor would like to stake his money in such an unquiet land, even if his own country's government urges him to.

Implications

A nincompoop regime in New Delhi failed to comprehend the global significance of the consequences of the destruction of the mosque at Ayodhya. It is similarly unable to appreciate the implications of allowing the Siva Sena a free run of the nation's most important industrial and commercial metropolis. The explosions on March 12 frightened some people off Bombay, but only for a while.

The Siva Sena missiles promise to do a vastly more extensive damage, and almost exclusively because of the existence of a so-called authority which is determined neither to see nor hear any evil and to be a million times circumspect before speaking any evil of evildoers. The world—and the world's investors—will reach their own conclusions.

JPC Urged To Conduct Proper Inquiry of Ministers

*93AS0809F Madras INDIAN EXPRESS
in English 22 Apr 93 p 8*

[Text] It is, to say the least, ironical that the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) investigating the stock-bank scam should ask the present and a former Union Finance Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh and Mr. Madhu Dandavate respectively, and a former Minister for Petroleum and Chairman of the Oil Industry Development Board, Mr. P. Shankaranand, to depose before it as witnesses after writing its draft report. While a draft report is subject to change, it does represent the basic findings of a committee. In the present case, people like Dr. Singh and Mr. Shankaranand, and to a lesser extent Mr. Madhu Dandavate (who was not in office during the scam), could have made valuable contributions to unearthing the truth. The Union Finance Minister, particularly, should have been examined long ago considering that several key institutions under his Ministry have either been involved in the scam or winked at it, and that such a massive crime would not have been possible unless the perpetrators were assured at least of protection from the highest quarters. Failure to do that and to question other ministers like Mr. Shankaranand, had only fuelled the speculation that the JPC did not mean serious business.

This speculation must be laid to rest now that the two ministers have been asked to appear. This means, among other things, ensuring that their examination is not reduced to a mere formality, that hard questions are asked and answers insisted upon. Meanwhile, the JPC has been put in a spot by Mr. Chinta Mohan who has pleaded for an opportunity to appear before it but expressed his inability to provide written answers to the questionnaire sent to him on the ground that he did not have the relevant files with him. The committee which has decided that Mr. Chinta Mohan should first answer the questionnaire must make up its mind as to what to do with his request for files and with him, in case he does not submit written answers.

The task before the JPC is not only to find out the systemic weaknesses which made the scam possible and devise more effective protective machinery for the future but to identify the perpetrators of what is clearly the biggest white-collar crime in the history of independent India. If it is unable to do the last, it will rightly be criticised for failing to discharge an important part of its mandate and will contribute to a further devaluation of parliamentary institutions in the public eye. Also, restoration of international confidence in the soundness of India's financial system, shattered by the scam, will in that case prove elusive. These will be serious consequences and the JPC will be held responsible for these if it does not now act with firmness. As it is, the public have not failed to notice that its decision to call Dr. Singh and Mr. Shankaranand—if not Mr. Dandavate as well—have been taken only under pressure from some of its members.

Rajiv's Constituency Amethi May Host AICC Session

*93AS0847A Madras INDIAN EXPRESS
in English 22 Apr 93 p 9*

[Text] New Delhi—The Congress leadership in a desperate gamble to cash in on Rajiv Gandhi's name, is likely to hold next month's special AICC [All India Congress Committee] session in Amethi, the constituency of the late leader.

Top party sources told ENS that subject to clearance from the Special Protection Group and the Uttar Pradesh administration, Amethi was broadly accepted as the venue of the forthcoming session at Wednesday's meeting of the Congress Working Committee [CWC].

The Rao loyalists who have come up with the plan to resurrect Rajiv's memory and his panchayati raj dream as the centre-piece of the strategy to combat the Ayodhya issue have proposed holding the session on May 29-30, that is the week-end after Rajiv Gandhi's second death anniversary.

The CWC decided to convert the proposed AICC session into a jamboree with a simultaneous convention of party workers and others involved in the field of panchayati raj. The CWC passed a resolution calling for convening a "special AICC session along with a panchayat raj convention." According to AICC spokesman, Mr V N Gadgil, the session would be attended by "eight to ten thousand" people including MPs [Member of Parliament], MLAs [Member of Legislative Assembly], MLCs [Member of Legislative Council] and zila parishad heads.

At the two-hour-long meeting of the CWC, most members including Mr Mani Shankar Aiyar (a special invitee). Mr Janardhana Poojary strongly pleaded for Amethi as the venue of the special session. Some members from the northern belt including Mr R K Dhawan, Mr Rajesh Pilot pointed out that the party had decided in the Tirupati session to hold the next AICC session in Uttar Pradesh.

It was, however, pointed out by some other members that Amethi did not have the infra-structure to support 10,000 people. The SPG [Special Protection Group] which has made preliminary investigation has reportedly expressed reservations over Amethi. In this context, the CWC also discussed other venues including Allahabad (home of the Nehru dynasty) and Kanpur.

A final decision on the venue and date of the proposed AICC session has been left to Mr P V Narasimha Rao, the spokesman said. AICC general secretary, Mr Janardhana Poojary confirmed that Amethi was "one of the possible venues."

Mr Mani Shankar Aiyar who was closely associated with the panchayati raj bills during Rajiv Gandhi's time will

head a special rural development cell of the AICC. In this capacity he will chair the party's panchiyati raj programmes.

A small drafting committee of senior leaders is to be set up to formulate the action plan for "congress panchiyati raj abhiyan." This committee will report to a larger committee which will clear the action plan to be unveiled before the special AICC session.

In his opening remarks, Mr Narasimha Rao described the panchayat raj and nagarpalika bills as "landmark legislation." It was a great achievement and revolutionary concept, he said adding that for this reason a special AICC session should be called to discuss the subject. The Prime Minister described the Karnataka bills on the subject as a model, but said that these shall not be binding.

Later Mr Aiyar was asked to provide the background to the CWC members. Mrs Shiela Kaul and Mr Rameshwar Thakur giving a brief review of the state of the bills, said that the Presidential assent was expected early next week.

Split Between CPM Alliance With RSP, Forward Bloc Reported

Contesting Elections Separately

*93AS0853A Calcutta BARTAMAN in Bengali
25 Apr 93 p 1*

[Text] In the Balurghat municipal election, the RSP [Revolutionary Socialist Party] is directly contesting with CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist] for all the seats. CPM has become desperate to break the stronghold of RSP not only in Balurghat but also in the whole of the West Dinajpur district even at the Panchayet level. In most of the districts, CPM puts either its candidate or a CPI [Communist Party of India] candidate, against the Forward Bloc. The unity of the Left Front may be possible in the municipal elections, but according to the political circle, it is not close at the Panchayat level.

Friday was the last day for the withdrawal of the nomination in the municipal election. The situation of Balurghat is the worst. In all the 23 wards, the RSP and CPM candidates are contesting each other. RSP is the ruling party in this municipality. CPM has also put a candidate against Chairman Dipankar Banerjee. The Congress and BJP candidates had also filed nomination papers in all the wards for themselves and others.

To resolve this conflict within the Left Front, Biman Bosu, a member of the CPM state secretariate and Nikhil Das, the secretary of the state unit of RSP, went to Balurghat from Calcutta. But they failed to resolve the conflict among the two warring parties. As a result in this "friendly" contest among the two partners of the Front in Balurghat, CPM has put its candidates against RSP in

the majority seats in the three-tier Panchayet election in the whole West Dinajpur district.

CPM is in conflict with another partner, the Forward Bloc, in the Howrah district on the question of distribution of seats in the Panchayat election. Both the parties are firm in their demands, mainly in the Ulborea assembly constituency. The Howrah district leaderships of both the parties sought the interference of their respective state leaderships to settle the matter. Forward Bloc has a strong organization in Ulborea. The Forward Bloc MLA [member of Legislative Assembly] Mr. Rabin Ghosh has put forth many brave fights against CPM in Ulborea several times in the past. Now CPM wants to take revenge. Mr. Naresh Das Gupta, secretary of the Howrah district CPM committee, has already declared that no seat will be given to RSP in the Panchayet election in the district.

CPI is facing deep problems in Mednipur by ousting Mr. Narayan Chaube from the party. In the areas where Mr. Chaube developed a strong party organization, now CPM wants to put its own candidates in those areas. CPM argued that after Mr. Chaube left the party, CPI does not have any organization in those areas any more. Mr. Purnendu Sen Gupta, secretary of Mednipur district committee of CPI, has informed the party's state leadership at Calcutta that CPM is not giving any importance to their demands in some cases.

Declared Non-Marxist

*93AS0853B Calcutta BARTAMAN in Bengali
27 Apr 93 p 1*

[Text] The CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist] does not consider Forward Bloc and RSP [Revolutionary Socialist Party] as Marxist parties. Today, in a press conference, the general secretary of the central committee of CPM, Mr. Harkishen Singh Surjeet made that comment. But he said that those two parties are leftist parties. Since they are not Marxist parties, they did not get an invitation to the international seminar on "Legitimacy of Marxism" organized by CPM, which will be held in Calcutta 5 through 7 May. At the same time, CPM leader Mr. Surjeet acknowledged the fact that because the CPM has been in governmental power in West Bengal for a long time and because the party is the most powerful in the state, this international seminar has been called in Calcutta. Mr. Surjeet also said that, for those reasons, many other advantages are available in Calcutta. In the meantime, a debate began in the political circle on the comments of Mr. Surjeet about the Forward Bloc and RSP. The senior RSP leader and the general secretary of the central committee of the party, Mr. Tridib Chowdhury, said to this reporter today that there was nothing to say as a reaction to the comments of Mr. Surjeet. But Mr. Chowdhury also said, "Whether or not we (RSP) are Marxist does not depend on the recognition of CPM." Same kind of opinion was expressed by another senior leftist leader Mr. Chitta Bosu, the general secretary of the central committee of

the Forward Bloc. Mr. Bosu said that not considering them Marxists, in spite of stamping them leftists, was a matter of over-simplification. Mr. Bosu also said that the Forward Bloc has a party relationship with the Communist Party of China and the Forward Bloc also has a fraternal relationship with the Communist parties of North Korea, Vietnam, and Cuba. Mr. Bosu said that the character of the Forward [Bloc] will not be determined on the basis of the judgment of the CPM. The Forward Bloc believes in scientific socialism and wants to implement the principles of socialism in accordance with the actual situation of the country. Mr. Bosu also said that the Forward Bloc wants to move with the people. There is concern in the political circle about the possible effect of the remarks of the CPM leader Harkishen Singh Surjeet on the eve of the Panchayet election in West Bengal.

On the other hand, the CPM called this international seminar on 5 May in Calcutta on the occasion of the 175th birth anniversary of Karl Marx. In the press conference, Mr. Surjeet said that the main subject matter of the seminar will be "the legitimacy of Marxism in the context of the present world situation." Mr. Surjeet further said that invitations were sent to the parties that believe in Marxism—the representatives of the Communist parties of 16 countries, including Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam, Germany, Britain, France, Brazil, and Belgium, etc. Though the CPM invited the Communist Party of China to participate in this seminar, it declined the invitation. When Mr. Surjeet was asked about this, he replied that the CPM had a discussion about this matter with the Communist party of China. But the Chinese Communist Party stated that they were unwilling to share the stage of any international conference with other Communist parties.

Among the Left Front's partners in the country, the CPM invited only the CPI, and the CPI accepted the invitation.

Mr. Surjeet said that whatever CPI had done before, now CPI believes in the basic principles of Marxism and socialism.

Disunity Benefits BJP

93AS0853C *Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA*
in Bengali 28 Apr 93 p 1

[Text] Chief minister Jyoti Bosu has warned the partners of the Left Front that the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] could take advantage of the disunity in the Front and could win seats in many places in the coming Panchayet election. The issue of BJP was the main subject of discussion in Tuesday's meeting of the Front, which was called to resolve the division within the Front in regard to the Panchayet election. The leaders of the Front are apprehensive in one respect that the Mamata group of Congress, the BJP, and the aggrieved portion of the Front are forming a secret grouping against the Front. In this respect, Jyoti Bosu referred to the incident of the

withdrawal of the nomination of the Congress candidates in favor of the BJP candidates in the election of the Habra municipality. He appealed to the leaders of the different parties of the Front, "If all of you try, you can cut down the conflict. Please don't increase it."

A unanimous resolution was issued about the unity of the Front in the speech of Jyoti Bosu. In that resolution, the leaders of the Front—Sailen Das Gupta, the chairman of the Front, Jyoti Bosu of CPM, Ashok Ghosh of the Forward Bloc, Nikhil Das of RSP, and Nandagopal Bhattacharya of CPI signed. It was resolved that attempts will be made to address the differences among the partners of the front until 3 May, the last day of withdrawal of nomination. Everyone has to accept the formula of the Front about the distribution of seats. In the Front's district meetings, negotiations should be held to resolve the differences. Those kinds of meetings can be called several times if necessary. The state leadership of the Front can also intervene if necessary.

According to Front sources, the differences in this Panchayet election among the partners is less than 10,000. The number may be 6,000. The differences between the RSP and the CPM is limited to the districts of Jalpaiguri, South Dinajpur, Murshidabad, and South 24 Parganas.

CPM Alone Upholding Marxism

93AS0853D *Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA*
in Bengali 27 Apr 93 pp 1, 10

[Text] The Forward Bloc and the RSP [Revolutionary Socialist Party] are not communist parties. For that reason, the CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist] will not invite them to the seminar about the relevance of Marxism to be held in Calcutta. Today, the general secretary of the CPM, Mr. Harkishen Singh Surjeet, stated this. About the IPF [Indian People's Front], their evaluation is—"We have many fundamental differences with them. And we don't consider them communist." But the general secretary of the CPM said that they recognize IPF, the Forward Bloc, and the RSP as leftist parties.

The leftist circle is surprised that those three parties are not invited to the conference called by CPM on the relevance of Marxism. Only the CPI [Communist Party of India] was invited to attend the seminar. As a reaction to the statement of Mr. Surjeet, the Forward Bloc leader Chitta Basu said today, "The establishment of scientific socialism as our ideal. Whether the CPM will recognize us as communist or not is a matter for the CPM. But we can say this—Subhas Bose was the founder of our party. We will go on trying to establish scientific socialism from the perspective of our country. And saying someone is leftist but not Marxist or communist—this type of utterances are nothing but over-simplification." In this connection, Mr. Bose talked about their relationship with other communist parties. Mr. Tridib Chaudhury, the general secretary of RSP said, "I have no reaction to this. I can just say that whether we are communist or not doesn't depend on the recognition of the CPM."

Today in a news conference, Mr. Surjeet discussed the international conference the CPM called in Calcutta next week. In that connection, he said that the reason for holding the conference in Calcutta is that they could not get all the facilities in any other place. Besides, he agreed that the credit of ruling this state for the last 16 years will be recognized. News agency reports state that the seminar on "The present situation of the world and the relevance of Marxism" will begin on 5 May. Sixty-five senior leaders from all over the world will participate in the seminar in Calcutta. The seminar was organized on the occasion of the 175th birth anniversary of Karl Marx. Mr. Surjeet said that the seminar was called in light of the events that took place in the former socialist countries.

Communists Term 'Ideologically Orphaned'

*93AS0865G New Delhi ORGANISER in English
25 Apr 93 p 7*

[Article by H.V. Seshadri: "Comrades, Stop Deluding Yourselves!"; quotation marks as published]]

[Text] Some of our friends suggest that the Sangh Parivar should launch a counter-offensive against the new propaganda line of the communists who have apparently donned the mantle of Hinduism and taken upon themselves the task of "saving Hinduism, now being perverted and usurped by the Sangh Parivar."

However, I must say, we are least bothered about Communist dialectics. In fact, their present surrender to Hinduism—even as a mask—is a tacit confession that words like Communism, Marxism or Socialism of whatever brand, will no longer serve as bait to catch the popular imagination. Within their own ranks, stark disillusionment regarding their theories and clutches has emptied the party of its ideological content. The unceremonious banishment of Communism from its fatherland has left the Indian communists ideologically orphaned. Since the Sangh Parivar has already taken up the standard of Hindutva, the communists feel that they too can take shelter under it and acquire respectability. It is like a life-long agnostic, reduced to pauperism, beginning to beg invoking the name of God. Does such 'devotion' of a mendicant ever make people look at him as a genuine devotee? So, why flog a dead horse?

Facts and Posers

However, some relevant informations for the public and a few posers to our communist friends, should not be out of place here. Communists are now banking upon Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda, Gandhiji and others to prove how their Hinduism differs from what the Sangh Parivar stands for. However, the communists' slander and vituperations against religion in general and Hinduism in particular is too well known to need any great elaboration. Here is a sample: "Hinduism has been, ab initio, a religion of the exploiting,

dominating, oppressing classes." "Like any other religion which is a tool of the exploiting classes, the opium of the people, Hinduism was such a tool from the very beginning."

Now, the posers:

- How is it that our comrade friends never mentioned the hallowed names of such Hindu spiritual luminaries for all these long decades—for whom they have suddenly developed so much 'reverence'?
- And never once in the past had they stated that the Sangh Parivar brand of Hinduism is totally at variance with what those stalwarts lived and preached.
- And further, that the latter should be looked upon as the torch-bearers of a new and resurgent Bharat?
- How is it that they have experienced this shock of a new revelation only after the resurgent Hindu voice started asserting itself?
- But after their new-found love for 'genuine Hinduism', how is it that their Government in West Bengal has weeded out the lives and preachings of all such Hindu Masters from the educational curricula and substituted them with those of their alien godfathers like Marx, Lenin, Stalin and Mao?
- Even now, after their new Hindu heart-transplant can they cite one authentic biography of those masters and their teachings which they consider as genuine Hinduism?
- Are they prepared to own the concepts, convictions and life missions of those masters and reject every other theory and slogan of theirs found opposed to these?

Hindu Nationalism

Coming to the basic concepts of Hinduism, as applied to the nation and propounded by those Hindu masters, the first and foremost concerns the name by which they recognised our Nation. Swami Vivekananda called it "Hindu." So also did Tilak and Aurobindo. Aurobindo, in his famous Uttarakapada speech declared: "The Hindu Nation was born with the Sanatana Dharma. With it, it moves, and with it, it grows.... The Sanatana Dharma, that is Nationalism." Swami Vivekananda proudly declared: "We are Hindus... I do not agree with those who think there is any bad meaning in it... by our actions let us be ready to show that this is the highest word that any language can invent." Annie Besant is equally—if not more—emphatic. For her, Hinduism and India are inseparable. Hinduism is the soul without which India will no longer exist.

- Do our communist friends subscribe to this name "Hindu" and the Hindu content of our nationhood? Will they now stop reviling and condemning "Hindu."

"Hindu Nationalism," etc., as communal, retrograde, obscurantist, fundamentalist and by every other abuse in their Jargon?

Agents of British Rule

Right from the thirties and forties, in addition to playing the role of British agents, the communists had been the most vociferous ideological spokesmen for the Muslim League's fanatic, divisive moves which finally resulted in the partition of the country. Nor has their fervour abated after Independence—as is evident from the fact that all the so-called historians and archaeologists labouring on the side of Babri zealots are invariably of the same red hue.

Now let us see what Swami Vivekananda had to say about the role of Islam: "When a man stands and says 'My Prophet is the only true Prophet,' he knows not the alpha of religion... Now the Mohammedans are crudest in this respect, and the most sectarian. Their watchword is: There is one God, and Mohammed is His Prophet. Everything beyond that not only is bad, but must be destroyed forthwith; at a moment's notice, every man or woman who does not exactly believe in that must be killed; everything that does not belong to this worship must be immediately broken; every book that teaches anything else must be burnt. From the Pacific to the Atlantic, for five hundred years blood ran all over the world. That is Mohammedanism."

It must be noted, that Babur himself was one of the most barbaric apostles and the founder of such a tradition in Bharat, whose monument of arrogance and aggression, our communist theoreticians are bending over backwards to resurrect.

Vivekananda on 'Babri'-like Structures

There is yet another secular section that never tires of condemning the Sangh Parivar for having, "denigrated and smeared the fair name of Hinduism" by demolishing the 'Babri' structure. Even some Muslim 'intellectuals' have shed copious tears that "the bright face of Hinduism known for its religious catholicity has been blackened." They bemoan that "an irreparable damage has been done to Hinduism and the image of India by Hindutva-wallahs." And most of them quote Swami Vivekananda to show how the December 6 act went against the very grain of Hinduism preached by that great religious authority.

It would, therefore, be appropriate to see how Swami Vivekananda himself felt about such structure: "Temple after temple was broken down by the foreign conqueror, but no sooner had the wave passed than the spire of the temple rose up again. Some of these old temples of Southern India and those like Somnath of Gujarat, will teach you volumes of wisdom, will give you a keener insight into the history of the race than any amount of books. Mark how these temples bear the marks of a hundred attacks and a hundred regenerations, continually destroyed and continually springing up out of the

ruins, rejuvenated and strong as ever! That is the national mind, that is the national life-current. Follow it and it leads to glory." What a bad turn for the Babri advocates—that the star witness they had banked upon should have turned hostile and issued such high accolades to the destroyers of symbols of foreign aggression and rebuilders of the adored points of national faith!

Credentials?

By the way, one is tempted to ask: what are the credentials of these gentlemen? Have they at any time in their life uttered a word in defence of the Hindu society? Have they, to their credit, any single action, which has made the Hindu look up with pride and self-confidence? Is it not a fact that in the eyes of Hindu society they exhibit an endemic Macaulay-Marx-Muslim complex allergic to all that our national identity stands for—its life values, its heritage, its history, its philosophy, its languages, its literature? And having assumed monopoly rights as "progressives," have they not after Independence been mainly responsible for keeping the nation's self in thraldom mortgaged to alien thought and living patterns? Having found that the Hindus whom they had been fooling all along have been through their mask, they are now assuming another mask—that of Hinduism.

However, may I suggest to the communists and other 'secular' apologists not to delude themselves into believing that their devious tactics would ever bear fruit.

Enthusiasm for BJP Claimed in Bengal

93AS0865F New Delhi ORGANISER in English
25 Apr 93 p 15

[Report: "BJP Bangs on Marxist Bastion"; quotation marks as published]

[Excerpt] Calcutta—The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] national executive which met here from April 10 to 12 generated great enthusiasm among the Bengalis, as reflected in the mammoth turnout at the Brigade Grounds rally, and proved a morale booster for the party's State unit.

Although the CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist]-led Left Front Government did its worst to put hurdles in holding the meeting and even refused permission to hold the rally (an order which the Calcutta High Court quashed), the BJP workers and sympathisers rallied to make the meeting a grand success.

The deliberations and the resolutions adopted by the meeting reflect the BJP's holistic view. The emphasis throughout the three-day proceedings was on security concerns and economic well-being of the people, particularly the farmers and the depressed sections of society.

Naturally, Bangladeshi infiltration was the subject of a detailed resolution adopted by the executive. Shri Sikandar Bakht, vice-president of the party, who released the resolution to the Press, brought in bold relief

the distortions caused by illegal migrants from the neighbouring country. The influx, he said, had made a mockery of India's population policy.

The BJP leader made a distinction between Hindu refugees and Muslim infiltrators from Bangladesh, and rightly demanded that they be treated differently. The Hindus were being pushed out of their motherland by means of religious persecution by the Islamic Government of Bangladesh. In the historical background of the country's Partition in 1947 on communal lines, Shri Bakht pointed out, India cannot say 'no' to Hindu refugees who were the victims of Partition.

Asked if Muslims coming from across the border were not forced out of their homes due to economic factors, Shri Bakht shot back, "Bangladesh can't be allowed to export poverty to India." Shri L.K. Advani later recalled that Bangladesh had pushed back two lakh illegal immigrants from Burma and said Bangladesh should be made to take back the infiltrators.

The BJP has decided to launch a nationwide movement to focus attention on the demographic distortions and social tensions generated by infiltrators. In December last, Bangladeshi infiltrators had burnt village after village in Assam after the Ayodhya incidents. The Party will identify the infiltrators and force the Government to deport them. The Congress and the CPM are however not interested in sending back these foreigners as they consider them their vote-bank. That is why the Congress organised a demonstration outside the venue of the BJP meeting to demand that Bangladeshis should not be sent back. That they could muster only 50 persons for the lack-lustre demonstration is another story.

The executive considered a detailed report submitted by the Party's J&K [Jammu & Kashmir] unit on the situation in Kashmir and adopted a resolution cautioning the Centre against following the suicidal path of restoring the pre-'53 status to J&K. It recalled that the Jana Sangh had launched an agitation and its founder, Dr. S.P. Mukherjee, had made the supreme sacrifice in his fight against the permit system and for the full and complete integration of the State with the rest of the country.

The BJP has given a clarion call for a countrywide movement if the government allows the Rajesh Pilot-Farooq Abdullah gang to wreck the country by negotiating with secessionists on the latter's terms. The situation in the valley is worsening and terrorism is spreading its tentacles in the Jammu region as well.

Problems of farmers were discussed at some length at the national executive and it was decided to explain to the people the party's stand on agriculture and Dunkel proposals. It is in this context that it was decided to hold rallies at block level throughout the country between April 28 and May 5 as part of a programme "Krishi bachao, desh bachao."

Shri Suraj Bhan, general secretary of the party, suggested that the national executive should deliberate on the

problems of the scheduled castes and adopt a social action plan to ameliorate their conditions and ensure the community's full integration with the rest of the Hindu society. The suggestion was welcomed by the leadership and it was decided that the issue be discussed at greater length during the national council meeting at Bangalore from June 18 to 20.

There was no separate resolution on Ayodhya which some political commentators misconstrued as the BJP's decision to put the temple issue on back burner. Nothing could be farther from truth. In fact, rebuilding the temple at Ramjanmabhoomi is the first of the seven commitments made by the party in the political resolution adopted by the executive on the concluding day. The fact that top leaders made repeated references to Ayodhya and ridiculed the non-BJP parties for their anti-temple stand is proof enough of the party's commitment.

It is obvious that there was no need for a separate resolution on Ayodhya. The situation has reached a stage where BJP need not reiterate its position on the issue. [Passage omitted]

Benazir Makes Striking Turnaround to Join President

*93AS0863A Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English
26 Apr 93 p 6*

[Text] Islamabad—After three years on the sidelines, former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto is making another bid for power.

In the aftermath of President Ghulam Ishaq Khan's sudden call for elections in July, Ms Bhutto is dictating terms, jockeying for advantage and placing her people in pivotal roles.

Some see it as a risky game that could lead to martial law if it misfires. But if she succeeds, her return to office would be cheered by the United States, an ally of Pakistan estranged by this country's nuclear policy and support for anti-Indian terrorism.

Ms. Bhutto, the first woman to lead a modern Muslim nation, was dismissed as Prime Minister by Mr Ishaq Khan in 1990 after 20 months in office.

Although she was accused of corruption and mismanagement the underlying reasons were her political clashes with the president and army generals.

Earlier this month, Mr Ishaq Khan ousted her successor, Nawaz Sharif, on similar corruption charges and for about the same real reasons. Mr Sharif had threatened legislation to remove some of the president's constitutional powers.

Striking turnaround: It is a striking turnaround for Ms Bhutto, who had accused Mr Ishaq Khan of committing

a "constitutional coup" when he dismissed her, but supported his ouster of Mr. Sharif's 30-month-old government.

Commentators say the horse-trading for power further discredits the political system as democracy feels its way free of military dictatorship.

Mr Ishaq Khan appointed a transition government drawn from all major parties, and has scheduled elections for July 14.

One of the new ministers is Ms. Bhutto's husband, Mr Asif Ali Zardari, who was jailed for two years pending trial on charges of illegal profiteering during his wife's tenure. He was acquitted on nine counts, but still is charged with kidnapping and extortion.

Ms. Bhutto is under indictment on seven counts of corruption, which are widely perceived as being politically inspired.

Most popular: In a country where opinion polls are rare and unreliable, Ms. Bhutto, 39, is probably the most popular politician despite a term in office flawed by indecision, lack of direction and refusal to compromise with opponents.

Mr Sharif has strong support in Punjab, which is Pakistan's richest province and has 60 per cent of the nation's population, and among businessmen in other key areas.

As her price for supporting the president's move against Mr Sharaf, Ms. Bhutto demanded "free and fair elections" within 90 days. She said that was possible only if the president also dismissed the four provincial legislatures and held local elections simultaneously. AP

More Prominent Role for Bengali Language Seen Imminent

93AS0854C *Calcutta BARTAMAN* in Bengali
26 Apr 93 p 4

[Article by Amal Kumar Mukhopadhyay: "Bengali Language in the West Bengal Administration"]

[Text] It is being heard that the West Bengal government is going to take a fresh initiative for the use of Bengali language in official work. We do not think that any comment is required about the correctness of this drive. We are Bengalis and Bengali is our language. After birth, when we learn to talk, we speak in Bengali. We express our sorrow, anger, love, affection, respect, and ego in this language. We sing songs, write poems, and act dramas in this language. Rabindra Nath—the poet of this language—is our great pride, and the stream of Bengali culture flows into the life of our society through the Bengali language. Naturally, there is nothing unjust or wrong in the expectation that the official work done to serve Bengal and the Bengali people should be performed in the Bengali language. Since West Bengal is one among the union of states in India and it has to regularly communicate with the governments at the Center and

other linguistic states, the question might arise as to how West Bengal could maintain the necessary contacts, if all official work in the state is conducted in Bengali? But in fact, that is not a problem. By continuing the use of English for outside contacts the official work for all internal matters could easily be carried out in Bengali. The urgent need to use Bengali in official work was also noticed for another reason. The foundation of English knowledge of the youths, who are lately joining the government positions in this state, is not at all strong, and for this we gain nothing by only blaming them. The system by which the English teaching has been carried out in West Bengal for the past 10 or 15 years, does not teach the English language to nearly 90 percent of the students. Consequently, the English narrations now being seen in office work and directives are mostly full of mistakes. As more of the old government employees retire and make way for the new ones to get employment, the size of mistakes will proportionately grow so large that it will give birth to a comical situation.

However, the thought of using the Bengali language in office work has continued for a long time. During Bidhan Roy's [first chief minister of West Bengal] period, a committee of educators under the presidentship of Raj Shekhar Basu [noted Bengali writer] prepared Bengali terminology for the often-used English words in office work. This was an important infrastructural preparation for the use of the Bengali language in the administrative function of the state. Thereafter, the Congress government under the leadership of Siddhartha Shankar Ray became especially enthusiastic to welcome the Bengali language into the administration. As a result of this, writing of notes in Bengali on the files started in some offices of the West Bengal secretariat. But this enthusiasm did not last long because adequate preparations were not made for the use of this language in office work. The first step for this preparation, of course, is the setting up of a suitable infrastructure, and one of the components of that infrastructure is sweet and easily comprehensible terminology. The terminology the Raj Shekhar Basu committee prepared is undoubtedly very valuable, but because of the time gap it requires to be verified, it is only marginally useful. Moreover as that terminology contained more Sanskrit words used in the Bengali language, it could be considered in many cases as hard and far-fetched. Therefore, if the present government is truly interested in the manifold use of the Bengali language in office work, then it has to first take the initiative to compose the terminology afresh. Moreover, without the existence of enough typists and typewriters, naturally, it will not be possible to use the Bengali language in daily office work. But it is not possible for the present government, suffering from financial crisis, to immediately allot a big sum for this purpose. However, there is also a solution to this problem. For instance, without making arrangements for the use of the Bengali language at one shot to all government offices, preparations could be made to slowly implement it in phases at different departments. Moreover, without

making any attempt to appoint additional Bengali typists by the side of the already existing English ones, training in Bengali typing could be imparted to them successively, thereby averting the expenses for the appointment of new Bengali typists.

Along with the building up of this infrastructure, the thing that is especially required is a suitable mental set up for the administrative working circle. If those who are attached to the operation of the government machinery do not show spontaneous interest in the use of the Bengali language, and while practically working with it do not make sincere efforts to regularly refine and improve the official language, then the initial zeal and enthusiasm will slowly subside, and finally the efforts of switching language in the administration will lose its significance after reaching a particular point. In this matter there will be no problem with the lower grade employees in the administration. As they have difficulties with the English language, they will warmly welcome Bengali and never show any lack of enthusiasm in this regard. But the problem will be with the higher grade authorities, who know the English language well and are in the habit of working only with that language. But most importantly, many of them consider the use of English language as a special symbol of social prestige and dignity. Normally, they carry a kind of contemptuous attitude toward the Bengali language, because they feel that, though the highest excellence of cultural fulfillment could be achieved through Bengali, it is not possible to do office work with the help of this language. To find the source of this attitude, we look toward the broad psychological set up of the middle and upper-class people in the present Bengali society.

The picture of today's Bengali society is very strange. Those who live in the higher stratum of this society as a rich class, along with acquiring wealth, are devoted to the establishment of their own modernization and aristocracy. There is nothing unnatural in this trend, because those who are rich all over the world want to establish themselves as modern and aristocratic. They also believe that with this it will be proved that they have the foremost position in society. But the queer thing about those who are well-known as the upper circle in Bengali society is that they consider modernization and aristocracy as foreign, especially a synonym to Anglicism. Naturally, therefore, even being Bengali they are foreigners in social actions and behavior. They always use English both at home and outside and do not utter a Bengali word even by mistake. But such type of crows in peacock's plume—who smile like the French, cough like Englishmen, and become wild with whisky, soda, chicken, and mutton in five-star hotels—existed in the past and are also existing today. The problem of the Bengali society is not with this insignificantly small group. The most serious problem of the Bengali society is with the educated middle-class community, which once in the past introduced various welfare activities in Bengali life, and being infused with great self-confidence, steered the society's leadership. Naturally, the middle-class Bengalis then played a glorious role in the life of the

society. But with the decline in the flow of economic development in the state today, the educated middle class there is imperiled and destroyed. There is no bright hope, possibilities, or future before them, and because of that they have no self-confidence today. By getting the light of education, the areas of their expectations and needs are gradually expanding, and as a result, the unfortunate thing that is becoming more evident in the Bengali life is that the educated middle class—having no hope or self-confidence—is simply copying the upper class and inclining to take a place next to it. As a harmful effect to this trend, we find today the middle-class Bengalis also overwhelmed with the infatuation of Anglicism. Thus, it is being noticed that many middle-class families are now anxious to send their children to English-medium schools. They want their children to learn Anglicized manners, become comfortable with English conversation by keeping the Bengali language decorated in the cupboards of the living room captivated among other unread books, or at the traditional cultural functions or on the well-furnished platforms of the Rabindra Sadan and Nandan [two cultural centers in Calcutta].

Without being able to remove this unbounded indifference and disregard toward the Bengali language in present day Bengali life, any step, however bold that might be, taken for the use of Bengali language in the administration, would suddenly stop after remaining active for a few days. The educated middle-class Bengalis should remember today that for maintaining a regular touch with the bigger world of science and knowledge, it is necessary for them to master the English language, but in their cultural life and social behavior, the Bengali language should acquire the first and foremost position. No government can automatically create this feeling: it requires a spontaneous respect and love for the Bengali language by the Bengalis. But unless the West Bengal government immediately changes some rules and regulations which are still existing, it will be difficult to make the common people understand that the government is truly sincere in its resolve to use the Bengali language for official work. For instance, in the West Bengal Civil Service examinations, two out of six compulsory papers are on knowledge of the English language, and in other competitive tests organized by the Public Service Commission for jobs in the West Bengal government, the knowledge of the English language is thoroughly tested. It simply means that, unless one knows the English language well, it is not possible even now for anyone to get a West Bengal government job. Under this situation how could the Bengali youth of today be able to love the Bengali language or be encouraged to depend on it? At the same time, those recognized in the Bengali community today as the first ranking intellectuals—the noted writers, artists, poets, dramatists, actors, teachers, and journalists—also have to do something in this regard. If they can set up a bright example before the people by dispensing with Anglicism and the English language in their personal way of life and conversation and build a durable but quiet social

movement in favor of the Bengali language, then a healthy, sublime environment will slowly be visible in the state of West Bengal conducive to the use of the Bengali language in the administration.

Communists Seen Searching for New Symbols, Heroes

93AS0865A Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH
in English 1 May 93 p 13

[Article by Bishakha De Sarkar: "Left in the Lurch"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] It was a small group of people that huddled together against the early morning breeze to pay homage to V.I. Lenin on April 22. The low-profile show, organised by the Communist Party of India [CPI] to mark Lenin's birth anniversary, was attended by only a few of its leaders this year. And unlike other occasions, the central office of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)] did nothing to mark the event, leaving the celebrations to its state units.

For the Left, there is of course no questioning the importance of Lenin. But, as Thursday's quiet celebration shows, Lenin—or Marx, Engels or Stalin for that matter—is no longer as effective a slogan for rallying the Indian people together as it once was. Today the search is for symbols and slogans near home.

The Left, especially the CPI, is, for instance, greatly engrossed in the celebrations of the 150th anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago address. It is busy organising padayatras through districts of West Bengal with large cut-outs of Vivekananda, Ramkrishna, Rabindranath Tagore and Nazrul Islam adorning king-size tableaux. It is celebrating rakhee bandhan day in Calcutta with the city's intellectuals and hoipolloi through songs, poetry and pledges against communalism. And these days, it is embroiled in a bitter argument with the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] on whether or not Vivekananda was secular.

The search for symbols, as CPI secretary M. Farooqi says, has been on for a while, though the CPI(M) seeks to stress that the symbols were always there and often used. "There is nothing wrong in our citing the examples of Vivekananda or the epics. We have been doing it for years," says CPI(M) MP Hannan Mollah. "But by some people's reactions, it seems as if we are quoting him for the first time."

Vivekananda's words may have earlier been used, but there is no denying the fact that today there is an element of urgency in the projection of the philosopher as a propounder of secularism. There are, as CPI MP Geeta Mukherjee points out, a few reasons for this. At one level, the situation worldwide has changed significantly. Socialism may not have collapsed, but the Soviet Union has, and with it the ideology's wont to draw people with ease. And, as the CPI(M), too, admits, the situation

within the country has changed considerably with the BJP effortlessly appropriating a part of Indian history and culture.

"We do not see it as a search for new symbols," explains CPI(M) Politburo member Sitaram Yechury. "But it is an attempt at preventing the hijacking of a certain culture of which Indian communists are as much a part as anybody else," he says.

Left leaders confess that their search for symbols has been forced by the BJP's fairly successful attempt to corner a part of the Indian ethos. Farooqi admits that after the initial euphoria of the freedom movement, the Left failed to take note of the disillusionment of the people. "This was a section which felt let down by the degeneration of the Congress in the post-Nehru period and was, therefore, searching for an alternative to the Congress. This section took refuge in religion and in the BJP which seemed to emerge as an alternative," he says.

To beat the BJP on its own ground, the Left has launched its offensive using the same weapons. If, for instance, the Hindutva brigade quotes Vivekananda to denigrate Islam, the Left has the thinker holding forth on the equality of religion. "We realised that it is a potent weapon," says Ms Mukherjee. But many in the parties regret that the Left has allowed the BJP to set the agenda. The CPI is far more critical of this, with Farooqi candidly stating that the Left's search for new slogans should have begun 20 years ago.

"It was a serious lapse on the part of the Left that we did not draw on the rich heritage of our Bhakti and Sufi movements, of the Bengal renaissance and so on," he says. Lamenting the fact that the process began only when the country faced a "serious offensive of communal and fascist forces," Farooqi says, "We have allowed the BJP and the RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh] to appropriate—or misappropriate—these aspects of our history." Adds Mollah, "Every positive and forceful flow also has a negative aspect. Every culture has a dustbin, and the BJP is searching its food for existence from the dustbins of Indian culture."

There is a fair amount of indignation over the BJP's open derision of the Left parties' believed re-discovery of figures like Vivekananda. Reiterating that the Left has, and can always stake its claim to these thinkers, Mollah says, "Indian-ness is not the monopoly of the BJP." And brushing aside criticism that the Left has blindly followed its counterpart in the West, he adds, "The Marxists of India have always attempted to imbibe its own culture. If a Marxist forgets the characteristics of his own country, he is not a Marxist."

In not allowing the BJP to hijack this tradition, Yechury stresses that the BJP's two-pronged strategy has to be first understood. On the one hand, he says, the BJP is trying to create a false sense of monolithic unity in Hindu diversity. On the other hand, he adds, it is attempting to consolidate this unity by creating hatred

against an enemy image. "And to combat this, we have to take the bull by the horns."

One way of doing that, the Left feels, is by uniting people with concrete examples drawn from the freedom struggle, the religious and reformist movements and the country's cultural heritage. "Whether it is Vivekananda, a saint or a sufi, we have to project them all. We have to remind the people over and over again that when Kabir died, Hindus said he was a Hindu, and Muslims fervently believed he was a Muslim," says Farooqi.

Ms Mukherjee adds that in this fight, the symbols of inspiration have to be drawn from the Indian reality. "To preach secularism at the grassroots level, we will find no better tool than the words of Vivekananda," she asserts. "Definitely, a symbol or a slogan that is nearer home will be far more effective than a symbol that is seen to be remote."

But Left leaders seek to stress that the propagation of Vivekananda or Ramkrishna does not imply that Lenin or Marx have been rendered irrelevant. "We are using an Indian context to only enrich the Marxist concept," says Mollah. His colleague in Parliament adds that the Left has to use the symbol of Vivekananda, but selectively. "Somewhere we have to use the symbol of Vivekananda, somewhere else the slogan of Lenin," she explains. "The fact remains that to make people come around to our point of view, we will have to use those words that they understand," says the veteran MP.

Ms Mukherjee recalls an incident that drives home the point. Some years ago she was in Bombay to attend a women's conference. A young relative accompanied her to the conference. At the end of the meeting, the apolitical and puzzled relative asked Ms Mukherjee whether the conference was for only those who believed in their cause. "I said, 'Of course not. It is also meant for those who do not subscribe to our views.' But what she said to me then opened my eyes. 'When you start a speech with 'Who says Ram was born at Ayodhya?' you've already alienated a large section of the people,' she said. That was when I realised, yes. To make the people understand what I am trying to say, I have to do it with words or images that they believe in," says Ms Mukherjee.

Islamic Conference Dubs India as Villain

93AS0847G Madras INDIAN EXPRESS
in English 1 May 93 p 8

[Article by Nitish Chakravarty]

[Text] Recent reports from Washington that the United States is on the verge of branding Pakistan as a state involved in acts of terrorism have generated a certain euphoria in India.

The U.S. move has been viewed as recognition of the fact that Pakistan has for long fuelled terrorism in Kashmir and Punjab in order to destabilise India and coerce this country into accepting a deal on Kashmir on its terms.

Final Word

Official circles in New Delhi interpreted the statements made by senior U.S. officials before Congressional committees and elsewhere as a belated realisation of the Pakistani Frankenstein's lethal capability. The U.S. perception was also viewed as a clear signal of imminent action by the administration. The observation of so senior a U.S. official as Mr. James Woolsey, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, that "Sudan and Pakistan, while not being on the State Department's list of state sponsors (of terrorism), are on the brink" was taken by many as the final word.

Mr. Woolsey was reported to have told a Senate judiciary committee that Pakistan had supported Kashmiri and Sikh groups waging long-running insurgencies against the Central Government. Mr. Lawrence Pope, acting co-ordinator for counter-terrorism at the State Department, also expressed the Clinton administration's concern at Pakistani support for militant groups engaged in terrorist acts.

The Bush administration told Pakistan very clearly late last year that it had enough evidence of Pakistan's active support to terrorists, and was therefore placing it on the watch list for terrorism. Even Britain, a victim of terrorism for long, and Egypt, a Muslim country, have accused Pakistan of supporting terrorism. All these moves and observations put heart into South Block about the success of India's efforts in isolating Pakistan from its traditional friends.

But the deliberations of the 21st session of the 51-member Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in Karachi this week would have come as a rude shock to those who had imagined that the U.S. threat would spur other Islamic governments to reassess their own views on Pakistan's involvement in transborder terrorist acts.

The manner in which the OIC Foreign Ministers have not only sidestepped the issue but given their tacit support for Pakistan-inspired acts of subversion and violence is clear evidence that far from being isolated Pakistan has obtained endorsement of whatever it is doing to promote terrorism.

The tactless denial of permission by New Delhi to an OIC fact-finding group to visit Kashmir last February gave them an alibi to draw heavily upon imagination and level the wildest accusations about the suppression of freedom and human rights in the disturbed valley.

Significant Shift

The coincidence of the OIC meeting and a fresh upturn in the disturbances in Kashmir compounded matters. The group's observation that India's allegations of Pakistani abetment of terrorism in Kashmir are "baseless ... and a self-serving transposition of guilt" represent a significant shift in Pakistan's favour from the OIC's earlier references to human rights violations in Kashmir.

The fact-finding mission's fiat asking the OIC members to extend to the "Muslims of Kashmir" not just political diplomatic or moral support but also material help in their struggle for self-rule betrays its animus against India. Its decree that economic and trade relations between OIC member-states and India be conditional on India's changing its "repressive policy and practices in Kashmir" is a surrender to Pakistan's orchestrated tirade against India.

On the Defence

Its prescription that OIC members make bilateral as well as collective efforts to end the "repression" and mount concerted efforts at the U.N. General Assembly, the Human Rights Commission and other relevant fora to investigate human rights violations, and impose restrictions on scientific, cultural and manpower exchanges with India is aimed at putting India on the defence.

Even though the OIC Foreign Ministers have not asked for the immediate enforcement of the sanctions recommended by the fact-finders, the fact remains that in the Secretary-General's report and other official documents India stands branded as a nation that systematically gives human rights short shrift.

All this will lend further credence to anti-India lobbyists worldwide, whereas Pakistan with all its shady record of terrorism gets a pat on the back as a defender of human rights.

Pakistan's caretaker Premier, Mr. Balkh Sher Mazari's inaugural address at the Islamic Foreign Ministers' meeting in Karachi was intended on the one hand to assure Western nations that it is doing everything possible to curb terrorism, and on the other, draw upon the support of the Islamic nations in its so-called concern for the rights of Kashmiri Muslims.

In asking the OIC to denounce all forms of terrorism as it violates the "fundamental principles and spirit of Islam," Mr. Mazari clearly tried to delink Kashmir from complaints about militants' activities. His alibi was that some remnants of militant elements who had participated in the jihad in Afghanistan were now using Pakistan as a base for anti-government movements in their home countries.

In spite of putting Pakistan (along with Sudan) on the watch list, the U.S. now seems likely to refrain from the extreme step of formally declaring it as a sponsor of terrorism. The reason is the U.S. fear that such an extreme step might throw Pakistan irretrievably into confirmed terrorist hands. U.S. footdragging is not altogether unanticipated in view of its known perception of nuclear arms-making capability in both India and Pakistan.

Just a Ploy

Seen against this background it becomes clear that former Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's insistence at the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] summit at Dhaka to bring Prime Minister Narasimha Rao round to a discussion on bilateral issues was nothing but a ploy to throw dust into U.S. eyes that Pakistan was all to sincere to sort out its problems with India through bilateral efforts but India was lukewarm.

The OIC meeting is obviously a big diplomatic gain for Pakistan and a setback for Indian diplomacy. It is no time for India to sit on its haunches.

Seshan Reminded To Be Fair, Nonpartisan

93AS0847F Madras INDIAN EXPRESS
in English 1 May 93 p 8

[Text] The actions, style and personality of the Chief Election Commissioner [CEC], Mr. T.N. Seshan, have always been too controversial for the constitutional office he holds. The discharge of its responsibilities by the Election Commission in a free and fair manner has become very important in these days of widespread corruption, rigging and other cynical malpractices in the electoral field. Mr. Seshan has shown that he is capable of strong action but has simultaneously invited charges of bias, selectiveness in the exercise of his powers and arrogant behaviour. While he managed to retrieve some of his lost credibility with the conduct of elections in Tripura, the suspicion persisted that his actions on the Tripura poll had more to do with the larger interests of the ruling party at the Centre than with a genuine concern for fair elections. Mr. Seshan's refusal to fix an election date convenient to the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr. Vijayabkashara Reddy, and the recent cancellation of the by-election from a Haryana Constituency where Mr. Bhajan Lal's son was the Congress(I) candidate may be cited as instances of his readiness to act against the interests of the Congress(I) too. But critics feel that he is giving away on relatively small cases so that the credibility thus gained will stand him in good stead in bigger cases of partisanship. Whatever the truth, the fact remains that Mr. Seshan is not accepted as fair and non-partisan by a good section of political opinion in the country.

Mr. Seshan's communication to the President alleging "a breakdown of constitutional order" in West Bengal with an implicit suggestion for action under Article 356 is the latest in the series of his controversial actions. His grouse is over the inability of the State Government to appoint a Chief Electoral Officer. But the crisis is Mr. Seshan's own invention as he himself had rejected the names suggested by the State Government for the post. One officer had declined the post on health grounds but Mr. Seshan has now called for his medical certificate. The extent to which Mr. Seshan goes in his dealings with State Governments, political parties and others can only bring ridicule to his office. The very thought of invoking

Article 356 over the issue of appointment of a chief electoral officer in a State is an indication of the absence of a sense of balance. Things may not go to that extent but that is exactly why Mr. Seshan needs to exercise restraint and caution in his words and actions. The CEC should not be seen as a person who entertains outrageous ideas and behaves at times quixotically, often unfairly and generally unreasonably. Mr. Seshan's penchant for strong and decisive actions, which the defective working of our electoral system calls for, will help to improve matters only if strength is combined with fairness and credibility.

Political Leadership, Direction Titled 'Third Rate'

*93AS0864J Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English
4 May 93 p 8*

[Article by Nikhil Chakravarty: "Lack of External Harmony"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] It is a Herculean effort not to turn cynical as you watch the cavalcade of third rate politics in New Delhi these days. In major issues confronting India today the government is bereft of any policy perspective. A sort of debilitating vacuity prevails over the ruling establishment. An amazingly glaring inconsistency on the part of New Delhi is at present the talk of the town. This relates to the allegation of Pakistan's complicity in the Bombay blasts on March 12. Right from the beginning the government and the ruling Congress circles set the propaganda line that Pakistan was directly involved in the entire operation. Inevitably the notorious Inter-Services Intelligence [ISI] was given credit for masterminding it.

Mr Sharad Pawar thundered at the Surjkund Congress committee session, giving a graphic account of how the Pakistani hand could be traced. One cannot blame his audience at Surjkund and the public at large for taking him seriously. Mr Pawar is not only the chief minister of Maharashtra directly dealing with the consequences of the Bombay happenings but was also, till recently, the defence minister of the country. He was therefore expected to be responsible about his pronouncements on other countries directly related to India's strategic concerns.

Then there is the jack in office minister for internal security, Mr Rajesh Pilot, who has gone on giving the impression he has in his pocket all the proof of Pakistan's complicity in the Bombay blasts.

In contrast, the minister for external affairs, Mr. Dinesh Singh, expectedly displayed a sense of responsibility in his statement on April 17. He refrained from making any allegation about Pakistan's hand in the bomb blasts. He concentrated on urging the Pakistani government's cooperation in catching the culprits, particularly the Memon brothers who were last heard to have fled to Karachi from Dubai on March 17. More pointedly, the Union home minister, Mr S.B. Chavan, told the Rajya

Sabha on April 28 that the Indian government had come across no "concrete evidence" about Pakistan's involvement in the Bombay blasts.

Not surprisingly, the Pakistan high commission in New Delhi has promptly issued a press note pointing out this discrepancy. It welcomed the stand of Mr Chavan and Mr Dinesh Singh and berated those of Mr Pawar and Mr Pilot. More serious is the impact of such official irresponsibility on the part of the government in misleading the public. This episode has not only made a laughing stock of India in diplomatic circles, as has already been noted by the media, it has destroyed the credibility of the government itself in the eyes of the public.

An almost nonstop campaign has been mounted with the authorities of the United States to declare Pakistan a terrorist state. It may be noted the U.S. administration for its own reasons has declared certain countries as terrorist: Libya, Iran, Syria, Cuba and North Korea. Officially the government takes the stand it has made no formal representation to Washington. But it is widely known there has been a lot of lobbying on this score in the fond hope the U.S. administration, now annoyed with Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme, will descend to turn to India. Particularly after the Indian government has done its maximum to reshape the economy of the country as per the dictates of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

While this campaign to brand Pakistan a terrorist state persists there is a surprising absence of any effort to sort out the problem of human rights that has emerged as a major issue, particularly in the West, both in government and non-official circles.

On the question of human rights, New Delhi seems to be content with merely announcing its intention to set up a human rights commission. But nothing tangible has come out of this decision. The terms of reference for such a commission are yet to be settled through consultations with different parties. The personnel of the proposed commission are yet to be identified. Going by the tempo of the government's functioning all these will take months.

The pressure of world public opinion can hardly be warded off given the fact the situation in the Kashmir valley is getting from bad to worse. The recent denunciation of India on this score at the session of the Organisation of Islamic Countries [OIC] will have its repercussions. Equally serious is the rising tide of human rights concern in Europe and the U.S. It embraces important circles traditionally known to be friendly to India.

Another faux pas on the part of New Delhi has created quite a lot of embarrassment. The defence ministry in its annual report presented to Parliament—as is customary for all ministries at the time of discussion on budget grants—has mentioned India's strategic concerns involve Pakistan and Iran. This is in line with the

thinking of one section of the defence leadership which generally goes by Washington's strategic perceptions of the region.

It is not difficult to understand that in the U.S. appraisal Iran is a terrorist state and therefore others should blacklist it. This hardly fits India's strategic concern. Antagonising Iran is detrimental to national interest. India's economic cooperation with Iran is advantageous, particularly when India has to import oil in large quantities. Secondly, Iran has taken no position whatsoever on regional issues, such as the convulsion in Afghanistan, which affect India's approach to such a crisis. There is room for coordinating a joint approach with Iran to many regional problems.

What is amazing is this assessment of the defence ministry is not reflected in India's foreign policy stand. There is good reason to believe the defence ministry's assessment was without any reference to the external affairs ministry, and the foreign office was taken by surprise. The foreign office has to face the flak from Teheran for a piece of irresponsibility for which it is not responsible.

Contradictions do come up in the running of any government particularly in a multidimensional administration. But what is unpardonable is the lack of coordination at very elementary levels between different departments within the P.V. Narasimha Rao government. At the political level, the prime minister is yet to form the cabinet committee on political affairs though portfolio after portfolio is piling up under his direct charge.

It is all very well to revive the idea of a national security council as has been indicated by Mr Rao recently. But any government worth the name has to ensure a working arrangement between key ministries like home, defence and external affairs.

CPI Seen Increasingly Insignificant

93AS0865D *Calcutta THE STATESMAN* in English
4 May 93 p 8

[Editorial: "End of the Party?"]

[Text] The most remarkable aspect of the internal strife in the West Bengal CPI [Communist Party of India] is that it has little, if anything, to do with the soul-searching in the Communist world after the debacle in Moscow. If the CPI(M) has survived, it is largely because it is a cadre-based party firmly entrenched in power in West Bengal. The CPI, not in the same happy position, is now tormented with a desperate attempt to grab the party leadership for what it is worth. The struggle has assumed progressively bitter dimensions since Mr Biswanath Mukherjee's death two years ago. The party seems on the brink of a precipice with the expulsion of Mr Narayan Choubey, the veteran leader whose individual identity in Midnapore, the party's strongest base in West Bengal, was a thorn in the side of the official group led by Mr

Nandagopal Bhattacharya and Mrs Gita Mukherjee. The party has come a long way from the days when it decided to stick to its ideological platform and let the breakaway CPI(M) seek the loaves and fishes of the parliamentary system. Leaders like Professor Hiren Mukherjee, Mr Mohit Sen and Mr Indrajit Gupta provided the ideological and cerebral support that sustained the party for many years despite some glaring aberrations like its support for the Emergency.

Now the party's Central leaders have chosen to stand aside and see its most effective and volatile unit slipping into irrelevance. The official group has no reason to feel elated at its victory in getting Mr Choubey out of the way in a manner that even Mr Indrajit Gupta considers hasty and unbecoming. But the dissidents include two M.P.s, Mr Gurudas Dasgupta and Mr Manoranjan Sur, and exercise some influence over trade unions; they cannot be expected to shy away from a fight. All that the official group can hope to do is to hold on to what is left of the party apparatus while the CPI becomes less important than the Forward Bloc and RSP [Revolutionary Socialist Party] in the Left Front. The CPI(M), incidentally, has never lost an opportunity to settle old scores with the CPI. Mr Narayan Choubey is an old CPI(M)-baiter and Mr Jyoti Basu's party should be only too glad to see him follow the path of Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda after having "had enough of Marx." The other CPI leaders engaged in the bitter confrontation may still prefer an alternative route to divinity. But neither are they seen to be preserving the old principles, however anachronistic they might be in the current setting. All that they are doing is to push the West Bengal CPI into insignificance.

Panchayat Election Success Seen Crucial for Congress (I)

93AS0854B *Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA*
in Bengali 5 May 93 p 4

[Article by Shibdas Bandhapadhyay: "The Challenge of Congress Retaining Support in the Upcoming Panchayat Elections"]

[Text] This is the fourth time since the leftists came to power in West Bengal that a three-tier Panchayat [local body] election is to be held. And for the first time, 30 percent of the total 72,000 seats will be reserved for women. The Panchayat elections will be held on the basis of the same electoral roll with which the general election was held. So it will be known from the election results whether any change is taking place in the shape of the mass foundations of people's support for the two rival political groups—the Left Front and the Congress Party. At the same time it will be also watched to see whether the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party], which secured 11 percent of the vote in the last Legislative Assembly election, can further its increase this time. But even if this time the number of Panchayat seats for the BJP increases more than before, the ratio of the votes might

decrease, because they could send candidates this time for only one-third of the seats (about 25,000).

Therefore, politically and qualitatively the 1993 Panchayat elections are different from earlier ones. The women in large numbers are already developing intimacy with the panchayat system. In addition, the women, who gained prominence and agility through the signature drive, could be an important factor for bringing social changes in rural Bengal in the future. The candidates elected for the Tafsili tribal reserved seats could also play a similar role in the future. All this could bring some changes into the class-alignment and class-balance of the panchayat institutions.

Until now the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] was supreme in the Panchayat elections. The other parties in the Left Front also received seats in the Panchayat according to their representation in the Legislative Assembly. As a whole, the Left Front secures 75 to 80 percent of the panchayat seats, and the Congress Party gets only one-fifth or little more than that. This time the outcome might slightly change. The CPI-M dominance could diminish to some extent not only for the Congress Party but also for the antagonism of the SUC [Socialist Union of Communists and some other miscellaneous and small leftist groups]. They all are unhappy wth the gradually increasing political supremacy of the CPI-M. Therefore, it is not surprising that just as in the last Panchayat elections, this time too the RSP [Revolutionary Socialist Party], the CPI [Communist Party of India], and the Forward Bloc candidates have entered into a friendly contest against the CPI-M candidates for 5 percent or 3,500 seats. Most probably the CPI-M will win about the same number of seats without any contest. The critics will say that the CPI-M forcibly did not allow other parties to send candidates, but that is not the truth. The fact is that the Congress Party or the BJP could not decide the names of their candidates for those seats.

There could be disagreements or debates on this issue, but the fact is that since 1977 through various Panchayat activities, the CPI-M has set up itself socially and politically so permanently in rural Bengal that it cannot be removed by raising the allegations of corruption. This time too the CPI-M is determined to uphold its undisputed supremacy in the Panchayat election. On the question of submitting nominations, the CPI-M has changed about 1,000 of its representatives who won last time. The party has also scrutinized the matter of nomination of candidates for the reserved seats.

The main topic in the election propaganda for the CPI-M and the Left Front will be to warn the public against BJP's communalism and the section of the Congress Party leaning toward the BJP. At the same time they will give information about the success of the Panchayat rule and the hopes and self-respect it has generated into the minds of the poor and neglected rural folks. On the other side, the Congress Party, though it may not say anything against the panchayat system, will propagate the truth of

how the CPI-M is using the Panchayat system for carrying out nepotism and corruption and using the precious funds received as fodder for its political objectives. At the same time they will also say that, if elected, they will bring the Panchayat system to its rightful honored place of local self-rule and make proper application of the surplus labor force in the rural economy.

The position of the Congress Party is little better this time compared to earlier ones. This election is also a test for the newly elected leadership of the state Congress Party. It will also provide an opportunity for the faction that always brought allegations against the state leadership of working without antagonizing the CPI-M to refute the opposing faction. For the first time the nomination issue was decentralized and the tickets [for nomination] were allotted only to those persons who had people's support at the grass-root level. To make sure that this is functioning, a wide organizational framework was built, spreading from booth level to block, subdivision, or district level. Probably much of it has been done on an ad hoc basis. However, this framework—non-existent for a long time at the grass-roots level—will strengthen the organized body of the party.

The state leadership claims that, while forming these committees at the lower level, efforts were made to provide a place for the representatives of all factions in the party. However, there are also differences of opinion on this claim. A dispute took place at a higher level between Zainul Abedin and Priyaranjan Das Munshi on the nomination of candidates for the municipal and Panchayat elections. But no one received a ticket this time at the recommendations of this man or that woman. In this background the Congress Party could expect a better result this time only if Somen Mitra, Pradeep Bhattacharya, Priyaranjan, and Mamata Banerjee can jointly appear in the canvassing. But the difficulty lies in getting them together. When the state leadership was keen on launching a campaign considering both the CPI-M and the BJP as rivals, Priyaranjan pointed out the existing reality in the state, considered the BJP more dangerous than the CPI-M, and wanted to campaign against communalism principally. In his opinion it would be more consistent with the line of secularism being pursued by the national leadership of the party. Therefore, his views could sound rather out-of-tune in the ears of the state leadership.

Mamata has not so far shown any particular interest in the whole process of the Panchayat election. After her bilateral meeting with Somen Mitra on the issue of nomination of candidates, both of them did not have any more contact with each other. Probably the current session of Parliament has kept her away from politics. None of the leaders who follow her in Calcutta have so far made any allegation or objection. The state leadership claims that the Mamata supporters received proper representation at the selection of candidates. However, Mamata's personal reaction still remains unknown. Perhaps later on she might start saying many things, but that is going to be too late. If the party committees—newly

formed at the grass-roots level for the Panchayat elections—succeed in increasing the number of seats, then the state party leadership could formally bring them into the party's organizational framework. In that case, people remaining outside these committees could become obsolete to the party.

The election strategy for the state Congress Party fixed by Somen Mitra allows the party to agree with any party or group besides the CPI-M and the BJP. It could be for this reason at some places the Congress entered into electoral alliance with other members of the Left Front. The CPI-M leadership came to know of this trick of other partners and thus gave orders that they go with all-out force in favor of the party candidates for those seats on which agreement could not be reached inside the Front.

On the other side, next to Somen's strategy, Mamata remained adamant with her slogan, which has the primary objective, that understanding could be possible with anyone besides the CPI-M. The CPI-M is concerned because, due to this slogan, the Congress-BJP understandings could be achieved at rural level meetings in many places. The majority of the Congress candidates had withdrawn their nominations in favor of the BJP at the Habra municipal election. Somen Mitra wants to view this incident as an exception and not a general trend. But if Mamata's strategy becomes successful partially or as per situation, then it will be done at the cost of making Congress weak. This could gradually shift the party's customary rural support in favor of the BJP.

Moreover, the Congress Party has a great shortage of money. The appeal of the state Congress leaders to the party high command for money was not fruitful. Now only the two central ministers—Pranab Mukherjee and Ajit Panja—are their hope. On the other side, the BJP's capital is overflowing. The bag of the CPI-M is also full. In this situation it is perhaps not unnatural for the party to feel hopeless. In the last Legislative Assembly election, the BJP caused a crack in the mass foundations of the Congress Party by getting 11 percent of the vote. If the BJP can hold the same number of votes without contesting for many seats, then it is obvious that the BJP has become a permanent force in the politics of this state. The leaders like Somen Mitra and Priyaranjan Das Munshi are concerned about this possibility.

Congress (I) Seen In Throes of Identity Crisis

93AS0837C Madras FRONTLINE in English
7 May 93 p 115

[Article by Manoj Joshi: "A Party Adrift: In Search of an Identity"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] The front page of THE STATEMAN's Delhi edition said it all. Next to the lead headline, "Show-cause notices to 5 Cong dissidents," is a cartoon of a determined P.V. Narasimha Rao chasing a harried Arjun Singh (labelled Singh parivar) with a lathi while the

Sangh parivar (L.K. Advani) eggs him on shouting, "Hooray! And don't be soft!"

The disease afflicting the ruling Congress(I) was never more evident than now. The grand illusions of power, unity, duty and discipline have gone (as have the magnificent props set up courtesy Haryana Chief Minister Bhajan Lal), and the grim reality stares the party in the face. This is the central message of the decision to extend President's rule in Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Meanwhile, the detritus of Surajkund continues to drift ominously. Four leaders, all except one from the northern wing of the party, have been charged with 'indiscipline'. Another, Human Resource Development Minister Arjun Singh, has been sidelined from the higher councils of the Union Cabinet. His name figures in one of the Cabinet committees reconstituted earlier this month—except this one on natural calamities. And the seating plan in the Lok Sabha was revised to shove him lower in the order of precedence.

On April 7, a show-cause notice was issued to K.N. Singh, M.L. Fotedar, Sheila Dixit and Chinta Mohan asking why action should not be taken against them for indulging in 'anti-party' activities. The identical notices read: "You have been deliberately engaging in activities and using utterance through media... against the interest of the party and its decisions, and your actions have been clearly intended and calculated to lower the prestige of the Congress." It also charged that during the All India Congress(I) Committee meetings, they had indulged in unruly behaviour and tried to disrupt the proceedings. The notices were signed by Balram Jakhar, vice-president of what is the only committee—the Disciplinary Action Committee (DAC)! In fact, the DAC met twice to finalise its plans before issuing the notices. The other members of the DAC are Union Civil Supplies Minister A.K. Antony, R.K. Dhawan, Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh and Oomen Deori. Its chairman is the Rao-loyalist, Vijayabhaskara Reddy, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister.

As significant as the names mentioned in the notices were those that did not figure. These included Arjun Singh who had been hauled over the coals at the Congress Working Committee; P. Shiv Shanker, Aslam Sher Khan and D.S. Bhuria. Some of them as well as those served the notice had sat on a dharna at the AICC [All India Congress Committee] meeting at Surajkund demanding the application of the 'one-man one-post' norm. In their reply, the dissidents have denied these charges and said that they have functioned under the party norms and its democratic procedure. The DAC considered their responses at a meeting on April 17 but did not take a decision on them.

Meanwhile, Arjun Singh continues his round of meetings in various States. His rally on April 4 at Kunda in Pratapgarh district of Uttar Pradesh was well attended, considering that it was avoided by the official Congress

party. The area falls in the constituency of External Affairs Minister Dinesh Singh, a person reputedly inducted into the Cabinet as a foil to Arjun Singh. Muslim voters in particular flocked to hear Arjun Singh at this and the various roadside meetings he addressed on his 60-km drive from Allahabad to Kunda. While he did not attack Narasimha Rao by name, it was clear from the thrust of his remarks who his target was. His refrain was: If the party was weakened in U.P., it would be weakened across the nation. On Ayodhya, he was clear, unlike Narasimha Rao who has uttered no word of regret, Arjun Singh said he had no explanation to give "but to apologise to the nation for the act."

Then, Arjun Singh toured his home State of Madhya Pradesh. His visit came in the wake of the High Court verdict quashing the imposition of President's rule and giving a boost to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Arjun Singh has taken the battle to the home-base of the Shukla brothers, Vidya Charan and Shyama Charan, who are being used by Narasimha Rao to neutralise Arjun Singh. Arjun Singh also plans to visit Punjab, specifically Ludhiana, the home-district of Beant Singh, another of Narasimha Rao's anti-Arjun "hit-men." His strategy is to keep indirect pressure on Narasimha Rao by walking the razor's edge between "discipline" and "indiscipline."

In the meantime, the Congress(I) strategy continues to be to retain the initiative through "administrative" and "police" action. The latest ideas coming up involve the change of Governors in U.P. and M.P. Accompanying this, no doubt, will be changes of Advisers and other officials.

The BJP strategy is to step up pressure from the time it becomes clear that elections to the State Assembly are approaching. For this reason it appears inactive now. But the idea is to get its organisational issues behind it and await the elections. To this end, it also intends to gain momentum by releasing details of its negotiations with Narasimha Rao over Ayodhya last year. This will show up Narasimha Rao as a prevaricator and more than soft on the BJP.

The Congress has alienated Muslims who were coming back to its fold after their disenchantment with the Janata formations. By acting against Arjun Singh and others who have taken a firm line against the BJP, it will ensure that the party will not receive a single vote from this community after its humiliation on December 6.

Another factor is the Thakur community which also feels alienated by the action being taken against Arjun Singh. The induction of a Dinesh Singh will not appease it. The goodwill of the Thakurs is important because they remain rural influentials in eastern and central U.P. as well as in M.P.

The issue is not one of Narasimha Rao's charisma and leadership qualities, issues of "discipline" or "indiscipline" but of ideology.

For the average Congressman, as the election approaches, the main question will be: 'Will I get the ticket?' Linked to this will be the issue: 'Who or what will help me get elected?' Narasimha Rao may well be the man who dishes out the ticket, but can he get his men/women elected?

Secular Ethos Claimed Alien to Society, Traitorous

*93AS0865H New Delhi ORGANISER in English
9 May 93 pp 19-20*

[Article by Jay Dubashi: "Secularists and Traitors"]

[Text] "Are all secularists traitors?" asked Sunil Dutt, father of Sunjay Dutt, when cornered by newspapermen in Bombay about his son's extra-curricular activities. It's a good question.

The answer is simple, though not as simple as the question. "All secularists may not be traitors, but most traitors will either be secularists or close to them."

The explanation is simple. Stripped of its high-sounding rhetoric, secular in the Indian context is nothing but another word for anti-Hindu. Ten years ago, the secularists would have had no compunction in saying that they were anti-Hindu, as Nehru himself used to do in his heyday. Today, it takes guts to say that you are anti-Hindu, and secularists are, almost by definition, a gutless lot. So they say they are secular, a word that does not really mean anything, but can mean many things. And if you are anti-Hindu in a Hindu society, which one of these days, is also going to be a Hindu raj, you are well on your way to being a traitor.

When dozens of bombs exploded in Bombay, you would have expected some of these secular men—and women—to come forward and denounce the bombers. As far as I know, nobody did. I was out of the country at the time and it is possible that some vague statements were issued. But there was none of that strong reaction that marked the events of January, when hundreds of secular men and women swarmed the streets of Bombay castigating Hindus, without any proof that only Hindus were responsible for the atrocities.

What were our secular friends doing, and not only in Bombay? What was the great secular fraternity of Delhi doing in March when over 250 people were killed? Why were they silent? This same fraternity was silent when hundreds of temples were demolished in Kashmir, though when a derelict building in Ayodhya was brought down, this same fraternity was up in arms. When you have different criteria to decide what is bad and what is good, that is when the seeds of treason take root. It is good that even a dumb Congressman like Sunil Dutt sensed that something was wrong when he discovered that his son was up to mischief in league with not-so-secular friends of his. But the dividing line is very thin. A secular man today can be not-so-secular tomorrow, and you have bombs all over the place.

For the first time, the West has realised that the term secular is a misnomer and you need something else to describe what is happening in India. A nation fashions its own criteria to chart its destiny. India is too big a country to be judged by the criteria of the West. The Nehrus tried to impose western criteria on India in the form of their Nehruvian model which has now been rejected by Indians. The secular people think that only the economic model has been rejected, everything else remains the same. This is a mistake. Nothing remains the same after Ayodhya. The Nehru model has been rejected lock, stock and barrel, and we are now in search of another model that will be closer to what India is, as a nation, and as a society. And this is going to be a Hindu model, for India is a Hindu country, and no other model can satisfy the Hindus.

We are a deeply religious society, for it is religion that has held this nation together all these centuries. It is our strong religious sense that has enabled us to survive and outlive all our enemies, first the Turks, then the Afghans, then the Moghuls, the British, the Portuguese, the French, the entire riffraff of the western and Islamic worlds. Without a sense of religious solidarity we would not have survived. It would be a disaster to discard this precious legacy, as precious as the waters of Ganga and Yamuna, which too have played their part in our survival. Ganga and Yamuna are also religious rivers, and so are the Himalayas. Everything in India is religious, and has religious overtones, for a Hindu is nothing but a deeply religious man, for his life is suffused by religion.

To say that we should abandon all this in search of a new paradigm is the height of lunacy. What should we have instead? The so-called wisdom of the West? What is this great wisdom that the West itself is discarding?

For years, the same secular fraternity that cries foul everytime we say "Jai Sri Ram" was swearing by the wisdom of the Karl Marx & Co, as if the Marxists had descended directly from the Gods. The leftists in India are the most vocal secularists, no doubt, because their clothes have been stolen by the Hindus. They had a ready-made model for everything, from fast economic growth to complex cultural constructs. Where have their models taken them? Half the communist world is no more what it used to be and the marble statues of Lenin, Stalin and Karl Marx are being used as park benches by old men and women. Yet Indian Marxists have the cheek to tell the Hindus that their model is wrong, and they should have a secular model instead. Can you really take these people seriously?

I have said it before and I should like to say it again: I am not a secular man, I am a religious man. I am a member of a deeply religious society, a society that, after a thousand years of bare survival against heavy odds, is now coming into its own. And it is coming into its own because it is a religious society, because it believes that religion is a strong element in culture and culture is a strong constituent of nationhood. Go to the West and find out what makes it tick. It is not democracy, it is not

their parliaments, it is not their so-called rationalism; it is the strong element of Christianity which keeps them going. Take it away and the society will collapse as the Marxist society did in Soviet Russia and neighbouring countries. The Marxist society was the first irreligious society, the first society based on the premise that religion was bunkum and opiate of the masses. After three-quarters of a century, the masses, opiate or no opiate, have rejected the false premises and sent the communists packing. And our communist friends here see red everytime they see saffron!

India is not red, it is saffron. Saffron is the colour of its soul, for it is the colour which has taken us where we are today. Go ask Sunil Dutt. After all, his first picture was Mother India!

Mamata Banerjee Seen at Odds With Congress Leadership

93AS0883A *Calcutta BARTAMAN* in Bengali
11 May 93 p 4

[Article by Rantidev Sengupta: "Mamata's Line in Congress"]

[Text] Something that was in the mind of many people but was never spelled out was said easily, with little trouble and without any hush-hush by Mamata Banerjee. By uttering these things Mamata Banerjee has cleared her position inside the party, and at the same time she has been able to quickly bring to the attention of the leaders the hidden intentions of a large section of the workers and supporters in the national Congress Party. However, a debate has started on Mamata Banerjee's statement and this will also continue.

What did Mamata Banerjee say? She said that Prime Minister Narasimha Rao has stepped into a blackmail trap of the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist]. Mamata Banerjee has made it known that she does not believe in a "got up" game—to play anything, it is better [to] have an open fight. If the Congress surrenders to the CPI-M, then in that case she asked them to think about "something else." She also said in clear terms that she will remain firm with her statement about the setting up of a "Bengal line" inside the Congress Party.

What the little mistake is in Mamata's statement or how correct her path is, I will come to later on. But let me first finish the discussion on whether Mamata should have made such a statement, when at this moment the Congress Party is on a crisis boat. Putting the party high command straight away to the accused stand, this statement of Mamata Banerjee was published on last Friday, 7 May. After the publication of Mamata's statement, I have noticed two types of reactions—mixed reactions—among the ordinary Congress workers and also in the general public. A group said that it would have been good for Mamata not to spell out openly these things, because by uttering them she is unnecessarily tangling herself into debates and is also being cornered in the party. Another group believes that Mamata has said

whatever is true, and she did not hide anything. But one thing that draws attention is that those persons who thought that Mamata should not have uttered these things now, could not however say that the allegations made by Mamata against the high command were absolute lies.

However, I personally feel that there was greater need for Mamata to speak these things at this time. The need is for no other reason than to put her position clearly before the party workers, supporters, and the general masses. It was very essential on the part of Mamata to say immediately these things for just the purpose of giving a clear explanation as to where she stands, what her thoughts are, and what she wants to do.

In fact, after that mammoth public meeting at the Brigade Parade Ground on 25 November [1992] the state Yuva Congress [youth wing of the Congress Party] under Mamata's leadership could not organize any such movement in the state. Of course, there were several reasons behind her sudden withdrawal after the movement reached its peak. First, a few days after Mamata's Brigade meeting, the Ayodhya episode took place on 6 December, and due to that the political situation in the country also changed. Secondly, at the Tripura election and many other events that took place after it, the image of the high command's dependence on the CPI-M was more nakedly exposed. Being in that situation, it became impossible for Mamata Banerjee to continue the movement under the banner of the Yuva Congress.

And thus, Mamata remained slightly withdrawn from the sphere of movement from that November end until now. However, in between she went to Tripura and carried out a strong campaign against the CPI-M. But her withdrawal from last November until now and her slight disengagement have given birth to many questions and suspicions in the minds of ordinary Congress workers and their leaders and also even in the minds of the general public. The questions that are raised since her withdrawal are: Does this mean that Mamata's movement has ended and the high command has put her into the coffin? Will Mamata become a "good girl" of the high command hereafter? Those Congress workers, who were optimistic for Mamata's movement, were disappointed from these questions and apprehensions. Even the rumors were circulating in and out of the Congress Party that Mamata was going to join the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]. A smoke screen has been created surrounding Mamata in the past few months.

Such a smoke screen is not desirable for any politician, and it is also not for Mamata. If the political position is not clear and suspicion and fear constantly exist with it and if the people do not clearly understand the meaning of a political statement, then there will arise doubts and conflicts about leadership. Therefore, it was extremely necessary for Mamata Banerjee to get rid of that smoke screen and not to allow any kind of doubt or conflict to build up about her. She had removed those doubts and conflicts by openly making

a statement and thereby cleared the smoke screen which was built surrounding her. At least no more "gossip" could be made pointing at Mamata because she has herself plainly stated what she wants.

And thus, whatever any one might say, it was extremely necessary on the part of Mamata at this moment to make this statement.

Mamata has spoken about the "Bengal line" in the Congress Party. She said that when the high command has taken the path of compromise with the CPI-M, it is essential for the state Congress to take a separate Bengal line for saving the Congress Party in this state. She said that, instead of seeking help from Delhi on the question of setting up of this Bengal line, she should continue her struggle inside the Congress Party and will not move even an inch from that struggle. Therefore, we could have a discussion on the second issue and, that is how much Mamata's Bengal line needs to be discussed in the Congress Party.

To see the situation in the Panchayat election, I recently visited two places—Salar in the Murshidabad District and Satgachia in the 24 Paraganas District. What came to my attention in both these places was that, besides a few "pockets," the Congress position was too poor. It is painful to believe that a political party named the National Congress Party still exists and it is still the main opposition party of West Bengal. The workers and supporters of this party at the lowest level in groups have quit the party and joined the BJP. Those who are in the leadership position and cannot leave the party are helping the BJP underground. A disheveled condition exists in the organization. The Congress has become practically nonexistent in the Panchayat election and, taking advantage of it, the BJP has come up in the rural and village areas. At the two places—Salar and Satgachia—when I asked the BJP workers who quit the Congress, "Why have you quit the Congress and joined the BJP if you have to fight against the CPI-M?" They always gave the same answer: "The Congress will fight no more against the CPI-M, because Narasimha Rao's Congress Party has a full understanding with the CPI-M." And on hearing them I could realize the importance of the Bengal line about which Mamata was speaking, and also what a great significance it has on the nearly sinking Congress Party.

One among the several important qualities that is required for leadership is the capacity to feel the pulse of the masses. The person who can understand what the people think or want can give leadership correctly to the masses. The most important quality in Mamata is that she can always feel the pulse of the masses better and that is why her movements are "popular" and get large-scale people's support. Because she has the capacity to feel the pulse of the people, she could understand what the lower level workers of the party are thinking about the high command and its policy of conciliation and appeasement with the CPI-M.

The majority of the people who are in the leadership today in the Congress Party, have no capability of feeling this pulse. They believe that whatever the high command says should be accepted with reverence everywhere in the party. Because of this belief, they have repeatedly trampled on and also are trampling on the hopes and aspirations of the party workers and supporters. Whenever the Congress workers wish to go in a certain direction, they suggest to them the path of compromise. They did not realize that at least in West Bengal the lower-level workers wanted the Congress as a platform for movement against the CPI-M. They formed the Congress with that objective and thus, whenever the party fell prey to the politics of adjustment, the disenchanted Congress workers started leaving the Congress Party.

Thus, for the Congress organization to survive at the grass-roots level, at least the Congress Party in this state will have to adopt the Bengal line. When the Delhi high command compromises with the CPI-M, the state Congress Party will have to side-by-side come forward on the path of a movement. Only then will the confidence of the Congress Party among the workers grow and the organization not be ruined by splitting at the lower-level. And if they remain sitting in fear of the high command, then the Congress Party will be wiped out from this state.

The Congress high command has never given, nor does it give even today, any importance to the West Bengal Congress Party. Putting the West Bengal Congress on the gallows, the high command wanted to stick to the ministry. This Panchayat election is a clear cut instance of it. The Congress high command did not bother at all with this West Bengal Panchayat election; on the contrary, at that time it called a meeting of the AICC [All India Congress Committee] dealing with the Panchayat issue. The AICC leaders also stated that there is no need for the West Bengal representatives to be present at the meeting. The people of West Bengal do not listen to these AICC leaders and they also do not give any political importance to them. They did not sign any contract to save the Congress Party by seeking help from AICC leaders. If the Congress has to be saved in this state, then it could be done through the "Bengal line" and not by seeking help from the AICC leaders. Mamata realizes this and the remaining others should also do the same. Otherwise, no one will be able to avert the responsibility for winding up the Congress Party of West Bengal.

Muslims Seen Unwilling to Accommodate Hindu Sentiments

93AS0864F Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English
11 May 93 p 9

[Article by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan: "Time for a New Hudaybiyyah"]

[Text] Syed Abid Hussain in the book, "The Destiny of Indian Muslims," attributes the continuance of Indian Muslims' problems to their tendency to look backwards

even in the face of the changes brought about by independence. The most important of these changes being the introduction of the democratic system. Despite the many positive aspects of independence, he maintains, Muslims still think in terms of the old, dictatorial rule.

Prior to 1947 Muslims had to contend with a government which disregarded public opinion. Neither could the government be changed or removed by constitutional means. It enjoyed the status of a supreme arbiter. Today India is a democracy. The government is elected by the people and is obliged to function according to the will of the people.

Regardless of the contingency Muslims have to deal not with the government but with the public if their affairs are to be settled. Muslims still labour under the impression the solution to their problems lies in the hands of the government. To the government alone they take their problems and from it alone they expect a remedy.

The best example of this is evident in the movement launched in the name of the Babri Masjid. The post-1986 campaign for its protection and subsequently its reconstruction was instigated by Muslim leaders who were so deluded as to imagine they could set themselves on a collision course with Hindus and that the government—still the supreme arbiter to the Muslims—would give a verdict totally in their favour.

What happened on December 6, 1992, made it clear it was a misconception on their part and still is. It belied what the prime minister, Mr Narasimha Rao, had publicly declared on August 15, 1992, that he would never allow the Babri Masjid to be demolished. Despite having despatched 10 companies of police force to Ayodhya and having made a number of other official arrangements, what actually happened was not what the prime minister had announced in all good faith. It was what the people had been clamouring for all along—the razing of the mosque.

This was achieved by kar sevaks who forced their way into the town. The mosque demolished, they removed all stones and debris and replaced them with a makeshift mandir. They managed to obtain judicial permission to place idols of Ram lalla inside it and offer puja and darshan.

This event is clear proof of the public being superior in strength to the government. It is a final demonstration of the public standing high above individuals who are voted to power, even when the individuals are accorded ministerial rank. It would be naive to think the government which failed to prevent the demolition of the masjid would have the power to demolish the newly constructed mandir, either peacefully or by force. Or even remove the idols placed therein for the purpose of rebuilding the mosque on its former site.

Yet, as reported in the Press, a delegation of 20 prominent personalities of the All India Muslim Personal Law

Board went to the capital last month where they prepared a memorandum of consensus asking the government to remove the makeshift mandir and rebuild the mosque at the same site. The memorandum was submitted to the prime minister at a meeting they had with him on April 5. It was obvious the demolition of the Babri Masjid had not jolted the Muslims into any kind of awareness.

The most poignant lesson the Muslims should have learnt from December 6 was that from that point onwards they would have to concentrate their energies on winning over the Hindus. All their efforts should have been channelled into influencing the Hindus rather than in making representations to New Delhi.

Given the present state of impasse it is incomprehensible that a delegation from the Muslim Personal Law Board should have even approached the prime minister with such a request. Mentally Muslims are still living in the India of 50 years ago. They are still unable to reconcile themselves with the fact that India today is governed not by a sovereign with all powers rested in his own person but by the people.

Muslims have to change their way of thinking. Muslim leaders must meet Hindu leaders. They have to improve their relations with Hindus. Hindus and Muslims have to interact at all levels if tensions are to be eased between them and misunderstandings removed.

The need of the hour therefore is the initiation of a Hindu-Muslim dialogue at the all India level with the participation of serious and influential people from both communities. Its aim should be promotion of peace in a purely non-political way.

Such a dialogue would provide the opportunity to members of both communities to state what they want from each other. They could strive towards ending this confrontation and discover common grounds on the basis of which the two could live like good neighbours.

The holding of such a dialogue is in consonance with the Islamic shariat. An instance of the success of such a dialogue can be found in Islamic history—in the peace treaty of Hudaybiyyah. The purpose of the treaty was to restore peace. After the Prophet's migration in AD 622 relations between Muslims and non-Muslims deteriorated sharply resulting in a number of armed confrontations. The treaty takes its name, Hudaybiyyah, from a place near Mecca where the Prophet came to stay for two weeks in 628. There he negotiated with the non-Muslims. Peace was so important to the Prophet that to achieve this he went so far as to concede all the conditions of the non-Muslims.

The rock on which India's progress is floundering presently is the strained relations between Hindus and Muslims. If a dialogue could be held in all seriousness—in a spirit of accommodation and with a sense of justice—Hindu-Muslim relations could normalise. This in turn

would open up a whole new chapter in the history of modern India. Nothing would then stand in the way of the country's advancement.

President's Rule Extension in BJP States Regretted

93AS0863J Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English
11 May 93 p 8

[Editorial: "Regrettable Decision"]

[Text] The Union government's decision to extend President's rule in the four northern states which earlier had BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] governments is even more disturbing than their dismissal in the first instance. It is no secret that the imposition of President's rule in these states in December last following the demolition of the disputed Ayodhya structure was motivated by the Congress Party's own partisan interests. After the Madhya Pradesh High Court's judgment last April quashing the removal of the BJP governments, however, the ruling party at the Centre seemed to have realised the need to limit the damage done to its democratic credentials as a result of this drastic action. There was no other explanation of the hint given by the AICC [All India Congress Committee] spokesman that early elections might be held in at least some of the four states for the constitution of new assemblies.

Apparently, the Congress leadership continues to be nagged by a sense of uncertainty about the outcome of such elections. From its point of view, therefore, it will be safer to extend President's rule for another term of six months beyond the middle of June when the present term is due to expire. Even in Kerala, where the Congress has its government, it is obviously afraid of facing the electorate and, therefore, sought postponement of the scheduled by-election in the Ottapalam Lok Sabha constituency. A similar nervousness seems to have played a role in the deferment of the by-election in Palani in Tamil Nadu.

The atmosphere in U.P [Uttar Pradesh], H.P [Himachal Pradesh], M.P [Madhya Pradesh], and Rajasthan is more peaceful than in most other parts of the country and ideally suited to a revival of popular rule there by holding elections. But this factor hardly figures in the Congress government's political calculations. Its appeal to the Supreme Court against the Madhya Pradesh High Court's verdict is pending. This, too, cannot justify the government's refusal to lift President's rule. In fact, if the government were to agree to do so, it would have projected a better image of itself while it tries to defend its initial action of dissolving the assemblies of the four states and of dismissing their BJP governments. This possibility, too, has failed to persuade the government to correct its flawed stand on the entire issue of a proper use of Article 356 of the Constitution. Even at this stage the government can show a better regard for democratic norms by at least declaring its willingness to hold elections well before the expiry of the proposed second term

of six months of President's rule beginning from mid-June. If the government is not guided solely by extraneous considerations, it should find it possible even to propose, here and now, the provisional dates for the poll. Why, in any case, should the Centre take an inordinately long time to restore the constitutional machinery it, indeed, it had broken down in any state not plagued by insurgency

Ottapalayam Election Postponement Viewed
93AS0863I Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English
11 May 93 p 9

[Text] Thiruvananthapuram—CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist] state secretary E.K. Nayanar has alleged that the Ottapalam byelection was postponed as part of a conspiracy between the Congress(I) and the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party], while Opposition leader V.S. Achuthanandan has demanded the resignation of Chief Minister K. Karunakaran for having given an inaccurate picture of the law and order situation in the constituency and sabotaged the election process.

The CPM leaders made this demand at separate news conferences here on Sunday.

Nayanar, in a carefully-worded statement read out at the news conference, also called for the resignation of the Chief Minister on the same ground as demanded by Achuthanandan. He said the role of the BJP in getting the election postponed cannot be overlooked.

BJP all-India general secretary O. Rajagopal and vice-president Jana Krishnamurthy had demanded the postponement of the election. But the BJP national leaders have not yet reacted to the postponement. This clearly shows that there has been a conspiracy between the Congress(I) and the BJP in the Beypore and Vadakara tradition. The Centre had a share in the conspiracy, he said.

Restating his condemnation of the postponement, Nayanar said there was no justification for the action of the Election Commission. The argument that there was mounting communal tension in the constituency cannot be accepted, because Ottapalam has been virtually free of trouble in the aftermath of the Ayodhya incidents.

The ruling coalition was creating communal tensions by giving a wrong impression that the law and order situation had vitiated in the constituency, he added.

"We had once pointed out to the breakdown of law and order situation in the State. The Government denied this at that time. But the byelections slated for February were put off. But now the Government itself was coming forward with the argument that the law and order has vitiated.

"Even at the daily all-party meetings, the District Collector of Palakkad and the returning officer for the constituency had given a clean chit as far as the law and order situation was concerned. But the postponement

has come above his head when the printing of the ballot papers was almost over," Nayanar said.

Nayanar also wanted to know the reaction of former KPCC(I) president A.K. Antony on the postponement.

Impeachment of Seshan: In reply to a question, Nayanar said his party had decided to press for the impeachment of Election Commissioner T.N. Seshan. The party was also looking into various aspects of the postponement before challenging the EC's notification in the courts.

Achuthanandan called for the resignation of Karunakaran for having given an incorrect picture about the law and order situation in Ottapalam and sabotaged the electoral process.

"If the report given by the DGP [Director General of Police] and the IG (Intelligence) to the Election Commission was without the knowledge of the Chief Minister, then the Government is dutybound to take action against these officers. The Chief Minister and the Prime Minister had a hand in the conspiracy to postpone the election. The Congress(I) has risked this step as it felt that it would be resoundingly defeated. And the Election Commission became a part of the conspiracy.

"There was no incident in the constituency which warranted such a drastic action. In fact, the two rival camps were lodged in the same rest house, sweating it out in the election heat. The grounds for rejection of the April 15 report of the Government and the acceptance of the May 7 report were contradictory.

"The arguments for the postponement of the election have been foisted on the people because the ruling coalition was disappointed with the response to its election campaign. Karunakaran should write to the Election Commission that he is going to take stern action against the officials concerned if he feels that he has been kept in the dark about the report submitted by them," he added.

CM justifies postponement: Chief Minister Karunakaran said that the State Government had differences of opinion with the Election Commission regarding the Lok Sabha byelection from Ottapalam constituency. He said that if the Commission had consulted the State Government before announcing the poll, it would not have been necessary to postpone the election now.

Talking to presspersons, in Thrissur on Sunday, Karunakaran justified the postponement of election by the EC on the ground of anticipated communal violence. He said that leaders of a banned organisation were active in the constituency under the veil of a new organisation. They had sought police permission to hold public meetings in some parts of Ottapalam constituency. However, police did not grant the permission as the situation under which this organisation had been banned still persisted.

The Chief Minister said that postponement of election by the Election Commission is not new. Wherever the

Commission apprehended any problem for the conduct of a free and fair poll, elections were postponed and in the Ottapalam constituency it had apprehended communal violence, which would have thwarted a free and fair election.

While reiterating his stand that the State Government had no role in the postponement of election, the Chief Minister agreed that his Government had been apprising the EC and the Union Home Ministry of the law and order situation in the constituency, which was not satisfactory, from time to time.

Reacting to the allegation that the State Government had requested the EC and the Union Home Ministry to postpone the election as the UDF [United Democratic Front] feared losing the electoral battle there, the Chief Minister said that the people of Kerala had given the UDF Government their mandate to be in power for five years and even a defeat of the UDF candidate in the Ottapalam election would not have caused any problem for the UDF rule in the State.

Referring to the demand for his resignation, the Chief Minister said that "there are many people in the State wanting the CM to resign and they have the freedom to make such demands. But they would be disappointed."

Impeachment Motion Text for Judge Ramaswamy Viewed

*93AS0863H Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English
11 May 93 p 11*

[Text] New Delhi—Following is the text of the opposition-sponsored impeachment motion for the removal of Supreme Court Judge, Justice V. Ramaswami for "acts of misbehaviour."

"Motion for presenting an address to the President under clause (4) of Article 124 of the Constitution.

Somnath Chatterjee, Amal Datta, Chitta Basu, Nitish Kumar and Srikant Jena to move the following:

"This House resolves that an address be presented to the President for the removal from office of Justice V. Ramaswami of the Supreme Court of India for his following acts of misbehaviour:

- (1) That during his tenure as chief justice, Punjab and Haryana between November 1987 and October 1989, Justice V. Ramaswami personally got purchased carpets and furniture for his residence and for the high court costing about Rs. 50 lakh from public funds from handpicked dealers at highly inflated prices. This was done without inviting public tenders and by privately obtaining a few quotations, most of which were forged or bogus.
- (2) That he also got payments made to hand-picked dealers for furniture and carpets ostensibly purchased for his residence which were never delivered.
- (3) That he misappropriated some of the furniture, carpets and other items purchased from court funds for his official residence costing more than Rs. 1,50,000 [as published] and did not account for the same at all.
- (4) That he replaced several items of furniture, carpets and suitcases, etc., of a value of more than Rs. 30,000 which had been purchased by him for his official residence from public funds, by old and inferior quality items, with the object of deriving undue benefit for himself.
- (5) That he purchased from public funds more than Rs. 13 lakh worth of furniture and other associated items for his official residence at Chandigarh even though he was entitled to furniture worth Rs. 38,500 only. That in the process, he wilfully evaded several rules, and sanctioned money for such purchases by splitting up bills.
- (6) That he got purchased 25 silver maces for the high court at a cost of Rs. 3,60,000 from a firm at his home town in Madras at highly inflated prices without inviting competitive quotations. This was done even after the other judges of the high court had opposed the purchase of these maces on the ground that they were wholly unnecessary and appeared to be a relic of the colonial past.
- (7) That he misused public funds to the extent of Rs. 9.1 lakh by making the court pay for non-official calls made on his residential telephones at Chandigarh during his 22-1/2 months in office as Chief Justice of Punjab and Haryana high court.
- (8) That he abused his authority as chief justice to make the Punjab and Haryana high court pay Rs. 76,150 for even his residential telephones at Madras.
- (9) That he misused his staff cars provided to him by taking them from Chandigarh to hill stations for vacations and to Madras for his son's wedding and spent more than Rs. one lakh of public money for paying for the petrol of these staff cars. He even got himself paid for false petrol bills and other false bills relating to car repairs, etc.
- (10) That he sanctioned as official the pleasure trips or the trips made for his own personal work by his subordinate staff to places like Madras, Mussorie, Manali, etc., even though there was no official work to be done in those places.
- (11) That he gave four unjustified promotions each within 18 months to several members of the subordinate staff of the high court whom he misused for aiding and abetting his above acts done for his personal gain."

Motion for considering the report of the inquiry committee constituted to investigate into the grounds on

which removal of Mr. V. Ramaswami, judge, supreme court of India, was prayed for.

Mr. Somnath Chatterjee, Amal Datta, Chitta Basu, Nitish Kumar and Srikanta Jena to move the following:

"This house does consider the report of the inquiry committee in regard to investigation and proof of the misbehaviour alleged against V. Ramaswami, judge, Supreme Court of India, which was laid on the table of the house on 17 December, 1992."

Address to the President under clause (4) of article 124 of the Constitution.

Whereas a notice was given of a motion for presenting an address to the President praying for the removal of V. Ramaswami from his office as a judge of the Supreme Court of India by not less than one hundred members of the house of people;

And whereas the said motion was admitted by the Speaker of the House of people;

And whereas an inquiry committee consisting of:

- (a) P.B. Sawant, a judge of the Supreme Court of India,
- (b) P.D. Desai, Chief Justice of the High Court at Bombay, and
- (c) O. Chinnappa Reddy, a distinguished jurist, was appointed by the Speaker of the House of the people for the purpose of making an investigation into the grounds on which the removal of the said Mr. V. Ramaswami from his office as a judge of the Supreme Court of India has been prayed for;

And whereas the said inquiry committee has, after an examination made by it, submitted a report containing a finding to the effect that V. Ramaswami is guilty of misbehaviour specified in report (a copy enclosed);

And whereas the motion aforementioned, having been adopted by the House of the people in accordance with the provisions of clause (4) of article 124 of the Constitution of India, the misbehaviour of the said V. Ramaswami is deemed, under sub-section (3) of section 6 of the judges (inquiry) act, 1968, to have been proved;

Now, therefore, the house of the people requests the President to pass an order for the removal of the said V. Ramaswami from his office as a judge of the Supreme Court of India."

CPM Seen Conducting 'Charade' in Promoting Women

93AS0864B Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English
12 May 93 p 8

[Editorial: "Skirting Issues"]

[Text] Elections to panchayats in West Bengal over the last decade have become dull, predictable affairs. A new

dimension has been added to the elections scheduled to take place in the state at the end of this month because of the decision to reserve 30 per cent of the seats for women candidates. The ruling Left Front claims this decision was the fallout of the United Nations' Nairobi declaration of 1985 which emphasised the participation of women in local self-government. A counterclaim is levied by the Congress which would like to take credit for such an "enlightened" move. Such controversy exposes a very simple thing. The political parties, whatever be the colour of their ideology, are most interested in scoring points off each other. The more serious issues—the plight of women in society, their consciousness of their own situation and, most importantly, their right to mould and live their own lives according to their own wishes—have become of secondary importance. Women for centuries considered little more than appendages to males, be it fathers, brothers or husbands, have been reduced to mere electoral bludgeons in a male dominated political arena. Women qua women are of no consequence to the political bosses. They are not to be permitted any autonomy to assert their consciousness and their will in a man's world.

This has become increasingly evident from the unfolding panchayat elections. It is reported some of the political parties had difficulties in finding a sufficient number of women to field as candidates. The parties have fallen back on the ploy of getting the wives, sisters and mothers of their activists to serve as virtual dummy candidates. In this, given its overwhelming organisational superiority in the rural areas, CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] has been the most successful. What this means is the parties will effectively have a stranglehold on the voices and activities of women. What will be heard in the panchayat will not be the self-expression of women but the opinions of the party through feminine mouths. This is to reduce the whole project of women's participation in local self-government to the level of a charade. It is the established right of women to be the equal of men in all matters. Such equality cannot be accomplished by token gestures and concessions.

Judiciary Claimed Corrupted, Partial

93AS0865C Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English
12 May 93 p 8

[Article by Kuldeep Nayar: "Sorry Plight of the Judiciary"]

[Text] On a cold day in January, 1990, in Chandigarh, a back-bencher at a seminar on the judiciary shouted that the Chief Justice of Punjab and Haryana was corrupt. The remark made me feel that someone had pierced the dignity, power and impartiality of the high courts and the Supreme Court. In support of his charge, he gave me an official audit note on V. Ramaswamy, by then a Supreme Court judge.

Little did I realize then that my news story on the charge would one day snowball into India's first impeachment

motion against a high priest in the judiciary. The story was straight and direct. It said: "A Supreme Court judge, Justice V. Ramaswamy, has spent more than Rs 27 lakhs on furniture, electrical appliances and telephones at his residence while serving as Chief Justice of Punjab and Haryana High Court for two years. This abnormal expenditure—Rs 13.41 lakhs on furniture and Rs 13.61 lakhs on telephone—has been brought out in an audit note sent to the Chandigarh administration..."

The first resolution of the Supreme Court demanding an inquiry against Mr Ramaswamy came only on February 1, 1991, showing our diffidence on joining issue even on matters where the instances of corruption are listed in an auditor's note. The tortuous procedure for impeachment took another two years.

Between the first story appearing on January 28, 1990, and the motion of impeachment coming before the Lok Sabha, three years and three months have gone by. No doubt, the process consumed too much time and it needs to be shortened. But in the case of Mr Ramaswamy, the wheels of justice moved abnormally slow because many in the judiciary and the Government helped him. There were even efforts to divide the ranks into north and south. One Union Minister is still saying that "such misdemeanours" are common among Ministers. It is a sad commentary on the integrity of Central Ministers.

Still more reprehensible has been the continuation of Mr Ramaswamy on the bench, even after several instances of alleged corruption have come to light. Many appeals to him by his colleagues and even by a Supreme Court bench not to function were of no avail. The Chief Justice, Sabyasachi Mukherjee, who died of heart failure during his tenure, was the only one to have stopped allotting work to Mr Ramaswamy. But his successors did not.

Parliament should consider legislation to suspend a judge against whom there is a prima facie case of corruption. Such a law exists for Government servants. Once a judge is exonerated, he can come back and claim his seniority and arrears of salary.

That Mr Ramaswamy should have stopped functioning on his own goes without saying. Allegations of corruption against judges constitute a serious indictment. But there is also a moral side to the whole affair. Not only is Mr Ramaswamy guilty on this count but also those who have tried to cover his guilt.

An Unfair Deal?

And what is the sanctity of judgments which Mr Ramaswamy has delivered when his corruption was public? Every verdict of his will continue to be doubted. Those who have lost will harbour the suspicion that they did not get a fair deal. Will there be a review of his judgments?

True, some conscientious lawyers refused to appear before him, but many did. I am not so much concerned about the standard of rights and wrongs followed by

those who attended Mr Ramaswamy's court as about the conduct of Chief Justices who allotted him work. A former Prime Minister did not issue even the notification for the appointment of a three-judge committee which the then Speaker, Mr Rabi Ray, designated to go into the affairs of Mr Ramaswamy. It is no use finding fault with one Attorney-General; the entire system has become effete.

The three-judge committee has been forthright in its conclusion and has gone on to record how Mr Ramaswamy "misused" his official authority in a "habitual and wilful manner." The committee has found him guilty of "moral turpitude" and considered him "unfit" for any judicial appointment. A pertinent question is how Mr Ramaswamy got elevated to the Supreme Court when his record at Chandigarh was so bad?

Short of Hands

I once posed this question to Chief Justice E.S. Venkataramiah, who had gone along with Mr Ramaswamy's appointment. He was frank enough to admit that he was terribly short of hands at the bench and that he had to take the sour with the sweet if he wanted the Government's approval to fill the vacancies. The poor man was bamboozled by the Government which sent its Law Secretary to him to suggest that the retirement age of a Supreme Court judge be raised from 65 to 68. Mr Venkataramiah had only a few months left for retirement.

Some people in recent years have made it to the bench because they are considered "dependable" by the ruling party. The havoc the Government has played with the judiciary by making convenient appointments is a long story of naked pressure. Denigration of the judiciary by politicians is the biggest blot on India.

It was Indira Gandhi who set the trend in April, 1973, when she caused three Supreme Court judges to be superseded to appoint her nominee, Ajit Nath Ray, as the Chief Justice of India. Mr H.R. Bhardwaj, the State Minister for Law, has only refined the art. Mr Ramaswamy is one case which has come out in the open. There are many other judges who have not been exposed. How long will the nation suffer at the hands of those who are still wearing masks?

The Supreme Court, which is currently hearing a review petition against Chief Justice P.N. Bhagwati's judgment on the transfer and appointment of judges, may undo the harm done. Mr Bhagwati's verdict was that the requirement of the Constitution was met when the Government consulted the Chief Justice of India; his concurrence was not necessary. Since then the Government has made the judiciary play to its tune.

To some extent, the judiciary is itself responsible for its plight. Mr Bhagwati was more open than others when he wrote a laudatory letter to Indira Gandhi to welcome her return to power in 1980. But some of his predecessors sent flowers or made some other gestures to a new Prime Minister. A few successors have maintained "the tradition" in some way.

In the process, the majesty of the law has been lowered. Whether it is Mr Ramaswamy today or someone else

tomorrow, it is of little consequence because the judiciary has come to lose the sheen it once had. The oath the judges take on their appointment, says that they "will uphold the Constitution and the law." The distinction was made because the Constitution-makers did not want judges to forget the brick and mortar that the law provided to the polity. That is what is in peril.

"This is a court of justice," a lawyer once exclaimed while arguing a case in the Supreme Court of America. "You are in error," Justice Oliver Wendel Holmes, Jr., instantly replied. "This is a court of law." He meant that the court was primarily concerned with the meaning and constitutionality of law rather than with the fate of individuals who encountered the law. The tragedy in India is that individuals are increasingly having precedence over the law.

Promotion of Use of Bengali in Government Called 'Chauvinism'

93AS0864G Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English
13 May 93 p 6

[Article by Alok Ray: "Licence for Chauvinism"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] A small news item appeared a few days back. The West Bengal government has asked all its departments, directorates and district magistrates to change the number plates on their official vehicles from English to Bengali immediately. Further, all signboards and nameplates outside office chambers and even the details of subjects on the covers of official files should be in Bengali. Official replies from state government offices should be in Bengali, Nepali and Urdu.

The circular, issued by the information department, did not say whether the letters received in Hindi should be replied to in that language. It has however said letters sent to state government offices by "non-Bengali persons and foreigners" should be answered in English only.

This recalls two episodes in recent history. One occurred during the days of Raj Narain as Central minister who insisted on receiving and replying to correspondence in Hindi only. The other is the Amra Bangali hordes blackening signboards written in English or any other language in Calcutta.

Of course there are some differences. Unlike the maverick Raj Narain, the West Bengal government, in particular its department of information and culture, is reputed to consist of gentlemen unguided by parochial instincts. These men speak volumes on national integration and unity on every conceivable occasion. They have also conceded letters written in Urdu, Nepali or English should be answered in those languages only, not in Hindi or any other Indian language.

Also, the Amra Bangali did what they did under the cover of darkness. The West Bengal government intends to do it officially for only official signboards.

One would perhaps say West Bengal is not the first nor the only state in India which has made such demands. One hopes also this is not the argument the state will put forward. Because it is the argument most regional, parochial and communal organisations offer—that they are merely reacting to what others have done already.

The West Bengal government will possibly argue many people would not be able to read the numberplates on official cars if they were not in Bengali. Who are these people? If a person is illiterate, he would not be able to read anything, not even if it is written in Bengali. There are also very few people who can read numerals in Bengali and not in English. If there are some, the fault lies with the state's education system which does not give people even the minimum exposure to English at the primary level. If anything needs to be changed, it is this system.

Even a lock has numbers written in English which may have to be matched against the numbers on the keys. A carpenter or labourer painting a house has to read the numbers on measuring tapes or tins of paint. He somehow does it. The first requirement for the absorption of new technology and upgradation of skills at primary levels is the ability to read simple manuals. These are nearly always written in English. In any case, a poor villager does not need to read the numberplate on the car of the district magistrate or superintendent of police.

Consider the other side of the coin. Though Calcutta has lost some of its cosmopolitan quality, it still has a large number of non-Bengali residents, not to speak of visitors from other states and abroad. If such a person were knocked down by a government vehicle on the streets of the city, he would not be able to take down the number on the license plate.

Some would accuse me of overreacting. If the change-over from English were only to be confined to number plates on official cars and signboards, there would be no cause to worry. But such measures have a way of being taken too far.

I have been told non-Bengalis, if they want to visit someone in Writers' Buildings, have to fill forms printed in Bengali, a language unintelligible to them. A Bengali colleague of mine did not know there were two different expressions in Bengali for deputy secretary and assistant secretary. When he insisted on filling the form in English, he was soundly rebuked by the gentlemen at the reception desk.

Forms issued by the Central government such as money order and income tax forms at least have instructions in both languages when separate forms are not available. The same should be the case with Bengali and English in West Bengal.

If numberplates on official vehicles are ordered to be in English, the next logical step would be to change the numberplates and then the names of routes and route

numbers on state buses. If state buses follow this rule, then why should private buses be exempted? Why then not insist on taxi fare meters in Bengali for the convenience of the poor Bengali commuter? It is another matter the non-Bengali traveller will not be able to use the public transport of Calcutta, a city as much his as a Bengali's. He would left to be fleeced by the taxi drivers. [sentence as published]

All this would emit the signal, whether intentional or not, that West Bengal is for Bengalis, just as the Shiv Sena insists Maharashtra is for Marathis. This would fuel regional sentiments. If official work is done primarily in Bengali, non-Bengali job seekers will become ineligible for government jobs in West Bengal. One wonders what would happen to non-Bengali Indian administrative officers stationed in the state. They would find it hard to read their files or communicate with the public.

If other states were to make similar demands, the national job market would become fragmented along regional lines. Think of the consequences for efficiency and national integration. The rationale behind all India services would be destroyed.

This brings us to a larger issue. The singular contribution of British rule in India, despite all its negative aspects, was the English language. Apart from exposing Indians to the literature, art, science and technology of the West, English provided a politically neutral means of communication between Indians in all parts of the country. Hindi is not spoken in the South. South Indian languages have no place in the North. There is no reason for Indians to give up the tremendous advantage English offers in a multilingual country.

Once things like numberplates and taxi meters are written in Bengali, the need to promote English in however elementary a form would be lost. A person learns a language only if he is exposed to it, in the way young people learn Hindi because they watch Hindi films or hear cricket commentaries.

More important, no Indian language can replace English as the sole all-India language for private or official communication simply because it would be considered an imposition by some state or the other. It would give occasion for accusations of "cultural domination." Hindi is clearly unacceptable in the South and eastern India.

True, English was also imposed on Indians but by non-Indians. No state or region will get undue advantage over any other if English is officially established as the all India language. Though it is spoken by a small number of Anglo-Indians, it would not arouse regional or communal passions the way any other language would.

Knowledge of and fluency in English is an advantage many Indian researchers and students abroad enjoy. Indian engineers have international demand because they are familiar with the language. Foreign investors

and businessmen find it easy to do business in India because communication poses no problem. Many countries are promoting English because they understand the importance of this global language. But India is trying to rid itself of what is one of its greatest advantages over other nations.

Some would argue by citing the tremendous progress in Japan despite the fact even higher education in that country is in the mother tongue. What they forget is all important books written in English and other languages are almost immediately translated into Japanese. This is something India cannot afford to do. Moreover all Japanese, unlike Indians, speak a common language. Despite this Japanese are serious about learning English. The increase in the number of English-speaking professors in Japanese universities in recent years is evidence.

On the one hand, Indian leaders talk about globalisation and integration in the world economy. On the other, they make attempts to snap the only link language India has within itself and with the outside world. This clearly goes against present national needs.

Bengalis take pride in saying, "what Bengal thinks today, India thinks tomorrow." For the sake of national unity, one can only hope the adage turns out to be wrong with relation to Bengal's current linguistic chauvinism.

Congress (I) Maneuvering Said Effort to Avoid Split

93AS0864I Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English
13 May 93 p 2

[Article by Sankarshan Thakur: "Congress Abstained to Avoid Regional Split"]

[Text] New Delhi, May 12—The fear of regional sentiment splitting its benches forced the Congress leadership to pull down the shutters at the eleventh hour and direct its members to abstain from the impeachment vote in the Lok Sabha last night.

The only solace that the Congress can draw from its role in what was billed as a historic event is that the whispered whip was obeyed without exception; Congressmen displayed how well they still fall in line with directives from the top.

Left to themselves and given a real chance at a conscience vote, they would have embarrassed the party no end. For it was apparent that the conscience of the party stood divided—not on the merits of the Justice V. Ramaswamy case, not even on political lines. Its conscience stood broken along regional frontiers.

The Tamil MPs [Member of Parliament] wanted to vote against the impeachment motion, a position articulated bluntly by Mr Mani Shankar Aiyar and rather furiously by the Tamil-spewing Congress member from Coimbatore, Mr Kuppuswamy Naidu.

The MPs from Maharashtra and some others from Andhra Pradesh were all made up on voting with the Opposition-sponsored motion. And why? Because the judicial subcommittee which indicted Justice Ramaswamy had two members from Maharashtra—Justice P.B. Sawant of the Supreme Court and Justice P.D. Desai, chief justice of the Bombay High Court. The third, retired Justice O. Chinappa Reddy, happens to belong to Andhra Pradesh.

There were others silently lurking in the Congress benches who would have voted for impeachment merely because the Tamil Nadu MPs had made it such a matter of regional prestige to shield Justice Ramaswamy. What the Tamil MPs could do, they could do too.

The firm pattern of regional entrenchment became clear to the leadership as the motion neared the voting last evening. Could the Congress afford to emerge from the impeachment with a fractured face? The issue was not only that this was a quasi-judicial proceeding and that any amount of cross-voting would not have affected the government's future.

The issue was could a "national" party like the Congress risk baring a conscience riven by regionalism. It chose abstention, or, as the Janata Dal's quick-silver MP, Mr Nitish Kumar, put it, the Congress(I)'s conscience had abstained.

The frenzied manner in which the party whips—Mr P.R. Kumaramangalam and Mr Mukul Wasnik—scurried around the Treasury benches handing out the abstention order spoke of the flap the Congress leadership was in.

Late in the evening it dawned on the Prime Minister and Congress president that allowing a conscience vote had been a terrible idea. The vote was not going to be cast on the merits of the case.

There was a lot in the manner of Justice Ramaswamy's counsel, Mr Kapil Sibal's presentation to applaud—his showmanship, his meticulous nitpicking, the intricate weaving of the case around legal loopholes.

But suddenly, it was apparent to the Congress leadership and the House that the applause he got from sections of the House was not for the substance of what he argued but because he was pleading the case of a favoured one.

Congressmen on either side of the case were going to vote for country cousins as country cousins. At the crunch of it was the Tamil MPs' loyalty to the "Tamilian" Justice Ramaswamy against the loyalty of Maharshtrian and Andhra MPs to their local brethren, who happened to be on the other side. The leadership hurried to pull a facade on that reality it cannot afford to publicly admit.

A lot was said on all sides of the Lok Sabha about how minds on the other side of the House were closed, how the House did not really wish to judge the case on its merits but was approaching the impeachment with its verdict predetermined.

The Congress alleged the Opposition had decided to hang Justice Ramaswamy before the motion was moved. The Opposition alleged that the Congress was determined to save the neck of the man in the dock.

The two sides appeared to be competing to sustain the other's charge of partisanship. The Opposition did not even hint that anything said on behalf of Justice Ramaswamy could change their mind. Having moved the motion against the man, it felt bound to stick to its position and it did. Its mind was closed and no one [in] the Opposition was making excuses about it.

The Congress, working on the sheer mechanics of party politics, felt obliged to oppose what the Opposition held. (It is another matter that further along the impeachment proceedings, the ruling party fell victim also to the mechanics of regional politics and abandoned its role altogether in the proceedings.)

The impeachment was reduced to a routine battle between the Treasury and the Opposition; it was as if members were totally unprepared psychologically to dissolve party-political differences—as any impeachment proceedings should require—and sit as a jury judging a case without favour or prejudice.

Historic though it was, the occasion and its requirements seemed not enough for members of the Lok Sabha to lift themselves from being legislators to a sombre jury. But it was perhaps not the occasion that failed them but they who failed the occasion.

Congress (I) Said Destroying Faith in Legal System

93AS0865B Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English
13 May 93 p 8

[Editorial: "Matter of Honour"]

[Text] Now that the Lok Sabha, or rather the Congress(I), has let Mr Justice V. Ramaswamy off the hook, the general opinion is that he could gracefully give up his post to spare his colleagues the embarrassment of having to deal with someone who publicly undermined a judicial commission while being part of the country's highest court and appealed to the legislature to save his skin. It is difficult to understand how he can dispassionately judge the actions of the Government to which he owes his continuation in office. In the system of checks and balances, the judiciary is vested with powers to scrutinize legislation and strike them down if they violate the Constitution. The judiciary has steadily broadened its purview, often by sturdily resisting pressures from the legislature and, on occasions, by coming into conflict with it. By ensuring the presence of the Manipur Speaker in court and staying the arrest of a journalist in Madras, who had run foul of the Assembly Speaker there, the Supreme Court sent an unambiguous signal that its relations with the legislature were on an equal plane at the least and what it lacked in terms of number or as representative of the popular will, it made up by being a

watchdog of the Constitution and, thereby, the entire ambit of governance. The Ramaswamy episode has not only brought the court down quite a few pegs in public esteem but also dented its self-confidence in dealing with the legislature which is prone to being rash and intolerant of criticism against it.

Mr Ramaswamy's defence was conducted on extraordinary lines. First, he challenged the findings of three eminent judges against him by imputing motives to them and refusing to co-operate with the panel on the specious plea that they were prejudiced against him. Such behaviour is reprehensible even in politicians; from a judge it is nothing short of blasphemy. Mr Ramaswamy's counsel might have conveniently dismissed the accusations, all centred on using a public office for personal gains, as a conspiracy born out of professional jealousy but the charges will nevertheless stick because three very competent judges found substance in them and Parliament rejected them not on the merit of the case but on the strength of the ruling party's majority marshalled for political considerations. Since politics saved the day for Mr Ramaswamy, it was inevitable that the issue would be camouflaged with crass appeal to parochial sentiments. The Congress(I)'s sudden fondness for a conscience vote was a flimsy disguise for its hallmark indecisiveness and inability to stand up for principles though the impeachment move was, as one member of Parliament put it, a test of national ethics. It is schizophrenia to suggest, as Mr Ramaswamy's counsel did, that personal integrity and intellectual probity can be separated, especially where a judge is concerned; it was even more depressing to witness prevarication and squirming being passed off for moderation and circumspection, as the Congress(I) benches did. The loss of faith in the entire legal system, already considerable with the dreadfully archaic systems, and corruption in the court bureaucracies, will be difficult to regain but the only ones who can do it now are members of the profession. Advocates, judges and judicial officers have for far too long been tolerant of the declining standards in the courts: now they must set the self-correcting mechanism going if "Your Honour" is not to become a sarcastic reference.

Postponement of State Elections Criticized

93AS0883B *Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA*
in Bengali 14 May 93 p 4

[Editorial: "No Alternative to Election"]

[Text] The period of president's rule in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Himachal Pradesh has been extended six months more. After the last 6 December Ayodhya episode, the center dissolved the elected governments of those four BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] ruled states. Among them Kalyan Singh, the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, claimed that he himself submitted the resignation of his government. However, the Central Government did not accept this claim and said that the Uttar Pradesh government was dismissed.

Of course, there were some reasons behind it. But there was no justification in dissolving the remaining elected governments in three states, because unlike Uttar Pradesh those states did not violate the Supreme Court orders. Even the excessively bloody communal clashes that took place in the Congress ruled Maharashtra and Gujarat following the demolition of the Babri mosque did not grow proportionately that tall in these three states. But still the Narasimha Rao government had to impose president's rule on them, because of severe pressure, on one side, from the country-wide secular and non-communal forces and a demand from the left parties, on the other. Even those who advocate the elimination of Clause 356 of the Constitution, under which a legally elected government could be dismissed, supported on that day this unjust step of the Rao government. But we, however, criticized that arrangement by calling it undesirable and undemocratic.

It was hoped that by the end of the period of president's rule a representative administrative system would be revivified by holding elections in four states, including Uttar Pradesh. The communal situation in the country was gradually normalizing, and even after the terrific explosions in Bombay, no tension or retaliatory feelings were created in other parts of the country in reaction. It is not difficult to understand that, despite some stray provocations here and there, the people of the country were leaving behind the dark gloomy circle of December's painful hatred and suspicion. The law and order situation in the four president ruled states, now under discussion, is also quite good, and at least compared to Punjab, Maharashtra, Gujarat, or Manipur, it is very good. Among them in Uttar Pradesh, the anti-BJP political forces have again become active. The leftists are winning in the students union elections in the universities, which are considered to be dens of the politics of fundamentalism. The other non-communal groups and secular parties are gradually becoming enthusiastic about capturing the stolen places in the state politics. In the other three states also, the influence and severity of the politics of fundamentalism are largely limited. It is difficult to understand the meaning in the home minister's statement that the communal fire smouldering under ashes would be inflamed again if elections are held in this situation. On the contrary, it is an ideal situation for starting a democratic process, such as the election. Obviously, the home ministry does not admit it, but they also do not give any satisfactory explanation for it.

Perhaps the Congress leaders belonging to the ruling central party are calculating something different. Most probably they believe that, if president's rule stays for some time more, a situation will be created setting up their own party governments in those states by defeating the BJP. If this is their intention, then it must be said that for their narrow party interests they are usurping the democratic and legislative rights of the people to elect representative governments in those states; this amounts to despotism. And if their intention is to determine the victory of secularism by crushing the influence of the

politics of fundamentalism, then it should be said that they are not making any preparations for it. Not any kind of administrative, political, or ideological arrangements were made in the president ruled states, which could reduce the influence of the fanatic fundamentalist forces. Does the central home ministry believe that only with the passage of time will the venom of communalism and fundamentalism automatically disappear from the society and therefore there will be no need for the creation of any cognizant endeavor, propaganda, movements, or public opinion? If that is their idea, then it is to be guessed that they are living in a fool's paradise. The leftist and other secular parties, who are the partners to this stupidity of the home ministry, should be made to understand this fact—to contain communalism and fundamentalism from the back door, it is useless to go through mere administrative orders and directives, it should be done face-to-face. To postpone the election for an indefinite period with a fear that, if it is held, the BJP might win, and for that reason to repeatedly make use of Article 356 of the Constitution, is in fact a misuse of the Constitution. It should be remembered that if ever the BJP turns into a central ruling party, it will play the same game with the same reason and then the Congress will have no moral rights to protest against that undemocratic behavior.

Postponement of Elections Seen Damaging to Congress (I)

93AS0881A Calcutta *THE STATESMAN* in English
15 May 93 p 8

[Editorial: "Rule by Decree"]

[Text] Mr. S.B. Chavan was being parsimonious with truth in attributing the Centre's decision on extending President's rule in four former BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]-controlled States to persisting communal tension that could have surfaced if elections were to take place. Stricken with inertia, the Congress(I) would have been more truthful in saying that it prefers to rule these States through remote control to dealing with Governments controlled by the Opposition and would like to extend the arrangement elsewhere. In the ruling party tradition, the months after the demolition of the Ayodhya structure have been marked by a reluctance to face the reality and the familiar pastime of bickerings and interference with the administration has continued in a manner suggesting that nothing has changed. The Congress(I)'s mistake in dismissing all the BJP Governments, and not just the Kalyan Singh Ministry, before the events of December 6 might have passed unnoticed in the subsequent outpourings of anger had the party made a genuine attempt to combat communalism. Instead, the ruling party has been dragging its feet in the matter, choosing between soft Hindutva and confrontation with the forces of intolerance. Not knowing what will wash with the voters, the Congress(I) has chosen the easy option of extending President's rule. The cavalier treatment of federal principles leaves a vast stretch of North India without a popular Government and the consequences

will be no different from what they have been in other States where Central intervention has become identified with bureaucratic misrule.

The Congress(I) leaders have been guilty of creating the impression that the timings of elections are a matter of convenience for the party without any thought of restoration of peace to which they were linked when Article 356 was invoked. Mr. Arjun Singh had spoken of elections in a year's time; there were rumours of separate elections in Himachal Pradesh where the Congress(I) is better placed. But in the end Mr. Chavan has resorted to the familiar ploy whenever feeling politically isolated, of calling a conference of Chief Ministers, this time on Article 356. Since the electorate will link President's rule to the Congress(I)'s style of governance, it is understandable that the party is afraid of facing elections. Peeved at having been denied access to power, the local leadership has reduced the administration in these States to a shambles. There is pressure on the Governors to accommodate partisan interests. The administrative lethargy, coupled with the Congress(I)'s inability to reach out to provide an alternative to bigotry, has given the BJP the confidence trying to storm back to power. Even if other combinations grasp power, such as the Kanshi Ram-Mulayam Singh Yadav alliance in Uttar Pradesh, the Congress(I) is in danger of being eclipsed before elections are even announced.

Attempt To Reunite Janata Dal Factions Analyzed

Little Success

93AS0882A Calcutta *SUNDAY* in English
15 May 93 pp 8-10

[Article by Louise Fernandes: "Putting the Dal Together Again"; quotation marks and italicized words as published]

[Text] The beards were somewhat greyer. The brows somewhat more furrowed. Was it age? Was it wisdom? Or was it worry?

A slice at a time. But all the Janata men together, twice before, had not been able to sink their teeth into that Black Forest cake called government. Would they finally get one more chance? Or would they end up, once again, with just the cream on the mustache? It was obviously worth the try.

Faced with 16 by-elections, four states going to polls in the near future—God and T.N. Seshan allowing—and the ever real possibility of a mid-term Lok Sabha election, the non-BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] Opposition appears to be making one more effort to get its act together. At the centre of the effort are Orissa chief minister Biju Patnaik and the one-time Karnataka chief minister, Ramakrishna Hegde. Neither of them ever had prime ministerial ambitions, nor are they likely to approach the problem with preconceived lobbies holding preconceived positions.

The first step was to negotiate with the four splintered groups of what was once the Janata Dal [JD], which had its brief stint in power from November 1989 to the summer of 1991. The main targets, therefore, were to be the Janata Dal(A) led by Ajit Singh, the Janata Dal(B) led by S.R. Bommai, the Samajwadi Janata Party led by Chandra Shekhar and the Samajwadi Janata Dal led by Mulayam Singh Yadav.

According to Ramakrishna Hegde, the second phase—which depends to a large extent on the success of the first—would involve reaching out to regional and special-interest parties such as the Telugu Desam in Andhra Pradesh, the Bahujan Samaj Party of Kanshi Ram, the Asom Gana Parishad in Assam, and the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] led by M. Karunanidhi in Tamil Nadu.

But that is just one component of the phase. The other, and the more important, one is the unity effort *against the BJP* which would necessarily mean involving the communist parties and/or the Congress.

The process is still very embryonic, but already there are symptoms which suggest that it might get aborted. That is because, while Hegde and Patnaik are quite content to play the role of a midwife, it is not so clear whether V.P. Singh, Chandra Shekhar, Mulayam Singh and Ajit Singh would be able to choose the godfather.

The first obstacle to Phase One appears to be the obdurate line of Mulayam Singh Yadav. He has already placed certain preconditions, even before coming to the negotiating table. His base line is:

- Kanshi Ram must be involved in the talks from day one.
- The other segments of the JD must show as much evidence of BJP-bashing in the other three formerly BJP-ruled states as he has done in UP [Uttar Pradesh]. Without this, he feels, any talk of unity against the BJP will only mean political artifice.
- Assurances will have to be given that the Congress—which he considers to be the *shaitan* (devil) as against the BJP's *rakshas* (demon)—would be kept out of the anti-BJP front. That precludes possibilities of seat adjustments. However, he adds that he is not opposed to the idea of the Congress supporting him in UP.

Mulayam Singh is obviously talking tough because he knows that he is the fulcrum of the anti-BJP front. The fate of the BJP in UP, more than in the other three states of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh, will decide the fate of the BJP in New Delhi. Also, among the JD leaders, he has derived the maximum advantage from his anti-BJP position after the demolition of the Babri Masjid on 6 December. It was not for nothing that he was once nicknamed 'Maulana Mulayam Singh'.

In this respect, he is clearly one-up on the other leaders. Whereas upper-caste leaders such as V.P. Singh and

Chandra Shekhar cannot afford to take an overtly pro-Muslim stand because of the risk of a Hindu backlash, Mulayam Singh has no such fears. His Hindu followers are totally with him. And so are the mass of the backward classes, which when push comes to shove, will remember how he unequivocally supported the implementation of the Mandal Commission report against the Congress' hesitancy.

The second obstacle that Hegde and Patnaik appear to be facing is V.P. Singh's reluctance to commit himself. He has his own preconditions:

- Whereas Mulayam Singh finds the Congress to be a *shaitan*, V.P. Singh considers both the BJP and Congress on a par. Hence, he does not even vaguely entertain the idea of loosely involving the Congress in an anti-BJP alliance.
- He definitely doesn't want Kanshi Ram to be a dominant member at the negotiating table. For, though he talks of a backward class or minority president for the JD, it is his man, viz Ram Vilas Paswan, he wants in that position, and not Mulayam Singh's.
- While Hegde is talking of a collective, politburo-type leadership, V.P. Singh has already made it clear that he would like Bihar chief minister Laloo Yadav to become the Prime Minister if the JD were to come to power at the centre. As Laloo is by no means an obvious choice, other leaders in the fold see this as V.P. Singh's old trick of propping up someone who will, at the last minute step back for him.

With Mulayam and V.P. Singh sitting out the first bout, it leaves Ajit Singh and Chandra Shekhar. Ajit Singh has his own troubles. His open flirtation with the Congress has already compromised his position.

So where does that leave the great Janata experiment?

Let us, for the sake of argument, assume that some new Jai Prakash Narain emerges—perhaps even in the form of Chandra Swamy—and waves his wand and unites factions. What next? How long will the unity hold?

Let's go back to 1977 when the first Janata experiment took place. Remember the euphoria with which Jagjivan Ram's Congress(O), Charan Singh's Bharatiya Lok Dal, H.N. Bahuguna's Congress for Democracy, the Socialist Parties and Nanaji Deshmukh's Jan Sangh had taken over? How long did the cracks take to appear? There are those who argue that too many big guns wanted to fire at the same time. In the crossfire it was the government that collapsed.

It is the same argument that appears to have broken the 1989 confederation. V.P. Singh may have become the Prime Minister by sleight of hand but Chandra Shekhar was no pushover. And Chandra Shekhar was, ultimately, the real Janata man, having been president of the Janata Party in 1977 whereas V.P. Singh was decidedly a part of the Congress power structure.

And again, it is this same argument which is bound to make the third effort run aground. Charan Singh may not be around but his ambitious son certainly is. Chandra Shekhar has had a taste of governance. He now knows more than ever how attractive is this thing called South Block. V.P. Singh, of course, is the man who wants nothing and yet gets everything. There is no reason to believe that he has changed.

There is only one difference. During the last two occasions, the opposition was clear about whom it was fighting. It was an anti-Congress Opposition. Thus, twice over, politics made strange bedfellows of so-called secularists and overt communalists.

Therefore, while you had in 1977 a Prime Minister like Morarji Desai, his foreign minister was none other than Jan Sangh man A.B. Vajpayee. His information and broadcasting minister was his arch-enemy L.K. Advani. His law minister, Shanti Bhushan, is now a star of the BJP.

With this background will they take on the BJP? Mulayam Singh says his face is intact. Way back in 1989, he warned his party about the two-faced nature of the BJP and when V.P. Singh and others insisted he give them over 140 seats in the Assembly polls he stuck to only 60. Hegde too says he was uncomfortable with the BJP but the concern then was more to shatter the Congress.

Today, can the leaders of the anti-BJP Opposition sink their differences with the Congress and put up a united front against the BJP just as they had done against the Congress in the past? Hegde is worried that if the act does not come together soon, the next Parliament will be hung.

And, of course, none has yet considered where Dr. Subramaniam Swamy is. Well known as the top trouble shooter of the Janata men, Swamy has impeccable secular credentials, but, like Ajit Singh, has blunted the edge of his knife. Swamy and Hegde ought to be on the same wavelength but everyone knows they cannot stand each other. Swamy had once accused Hegde of tapping his phone. Will he now pick up the instrument when Hegde and Patnaik call?

Communist-Like Leadership

93AS0882B Calcutta SUNDAY in English
15 May 93 p 10

[Text]

Janata Communism—Ramakrishna Hegde Suggests a Politburo and Collective Leadership to Ensure Dal Unity

Unity efforts of the non-BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] Opposition have always been plagued by squabbles at all levels. But the most significant battles have always been fought over the nature and composition of the presiding body which decides the leader.

Hence, the suggestion that a "collective leadership" be the basis of decision-making. The idea that a politburo-type body be set up at the apex level of the Janata Dal has been mooted by Ramakrishna Hegde, one of the prime movers in the current unity drive.

Hegde suggests that an 11-member politburo be set up with a national executive of 30 to 40 "functional" members. He sees a national council of 500-600 members with a secretary general having a one-year term. He will be an ex-officio member of the politburo.

The politburo will meet at least once a week, the national executive once a month, and the national council must hold at least two sessions a year.

Hegde maintains a diplomatic silence when questioned about who will be chosen the Prime Minister under this scheme. Effectively, the eleven members will decide who the leader will be. But there is no guarantee that personal rivalries will not mar the process.

In communist parties, the politburo decides most issues, including parliamentary and organisational matters. These are, theoretically, subject to revision by the central committee. But rarely does the central committee question the decisions of the politburo. Will this happen in the Janata Dal?

Mulayam Singh Hampering Unity

93AS0882C Cochin THE WEEK in English
9 May 93 pp 40-41

[Article by Debasish Mukherji: "The Stumbling Block"; italicized words as published]

[Text] A sense of *deja vu* permeates the entire process of the opposition unity once again being attempted in Uttar Pradesh. The process is proving as tortuous as it had been in 1989. As before, there are sections within each of the parties involved which are strongly opposed to any kind of alliance. If in 1989 the opponents of unity had been H.N. Bahuguna and Chandra Shekhar, today, besides leaders like Sharad Yadav and Ram Vilas Paswan, the main stumbling block in forging an anti-BJP, anti-Congress front is Mulayam Singh Yadav.

"I have been talking to Biju Patnaik, Chandra Shekhar and Devi Lal," said Mulayam Singh. "They all say we should come together, but on what basis? On what issues are we going to offer ourselves to the masses? Unless the fundamentals are clear, what is the point of unity?"

The words have an uncanny resemblance to the kind of statements Chandra Shekhar used to make in the days preceding the formation of the Janata Dal in 1989. Chandra Shekhar's fear was clearly that fellow-Thakur V.P. Singh, then the newest entrant into the opposition's camp, might portray himself as the most important opposition leader. And that is precisely what occurred once he agreed to merge. Today Chandra Shekhar, a leader without a following, is perfectly open to all unity and merger moves. Mulayam Singh Yadav now faces the

same dilemma as Chandra Shekhar did then: the other leaders are all seeking to ride piggy back on him, to take advantage of the work he has been doing at the grassroots level since December 6. But at the same time, he and his partymen know that the alliance between Samajwadi Party (SP) and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) forged last December cannot really defeat the BJP.

"We are not interested in any hurriedly cooked *khichri* of opposition unity," said Ram Saran Das, state president of the SP. "I would rather spend my time among the grass roots workers than with leaders interested only in self glorification," said Mulayam Singh. And that is precisely what he has been doing since the Ayodhya demolition. Even as the other non-BJP parties remained shell shocked, Mulayam Singh sprang into action. On December 14 the SP-BSP tie up was announced to fight "communalism and restore the secular fabric of the country which has been damaged by the Ayodhya events". The likelihood of fighting elections together was also made clear. Thereafter a series of joint meetings addressed by Mulayam Singh and Kanshi Ram have been held throughout the state. On his own, too, Mulayam Singh has been indefatigable: he has held over 35 different meetings, covering every part of the state from Dehradun in the north to Jhansi in the south, from Agra in the west to Jaunpur in the east. Despite the undoubtedly BJP wave prevalent in the state, the response to his efforts was tremendous in many places. In contrast, the only meeting the Janata Dal (B) held recently in Kanpur, proved a flop despite the presence of both V.P. Singh and Laloo Yadav.

So emboldened has Mulayam Singh grown with the response he has been receiving, that he surprised even his own partymen on the dais beside him, when, on March 4, in Lucknow, he demanded the holding of elections as early as possible. "The SP-BSP combination is quite capable of taking on the BJP by itself," he asserted, even though some of his own partymen are not too certain about this. But what Mulayam Singh knows is that, unlike the other parties, whose support base is nebulous, he and Kanshi Ram have solid vote blocs behind them.

"There is no doubt that the Muslims in the state are completely with us," said Ram Saran Das. "They (the Muslims) say that Mulayam Singh was able to protect the Babri Masjid, while the Congress government could not. At that time there was much criticism of Mulayam Singh for his extraordinary security measures to protect the shrine, the firing on kar sevaks, etc. It was said that by overreacting, he had inflamed communal passions. Even some Muslims felt that way. But today it has been realised that the only way to deal with the BJP and VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad] is to get tough with them," says Das.

But Mulayam Singh is loath to discuss what the future course of action at Ayodhya should be. Does he favour reconstruction of the mosque at the same spot? Yadav brushes away the query: "I have always said the issue

should be settled either by negotiations or by a court verdict. I am the only one who has stuck to this position, unlike others who keep changing," he said. Yadav is treading his political steps carefully. He has never referred to the reconstruction in any of his speeches. "He knows he has the Muslim vote. He doesn't want to alienate whatever few Hindu votes too he may get," noted a political observer.

In addition to the Muslim vote, Yadav, of course, has his own caste following solidly behind him. Kanshi Ram too has his core share of the Harijan vote, especially in Bundelkhand. The other non-BJP, non-Congress parties have no such committed voters they can bank upon. Even Ajit Singh was rudely shaken by the outcome of the last elections in UP, when large numbers of Jats in western UP preferred the BJP to him. Prominent leaders of Mahendra Singh Tikait's Bharatiya Kisan Union with whom Ajit Singh's relations have always been uneasy, also supported the BJP.

"No opposition formation in UP can afford to ignore the Mulayam Singh-Kanshi Ram combination," said Ram Sumer Yadav of the CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist], a sentiment with which all opposition leaders agree in private.

Mulayam Singh's main precondition which he does not openly state, of course, is not that he should be made chief minister if the opposition combine wins in UP. Most opposition leaders are willing to grant him that. What he wants is complete control over the distribution of tickets, so that, in the event of his victory, he will no longer be dependent on the support of V.P. Singh and Ajit Singh, as he was in 1989 when he became chief minister. "It has taken Mulayam Singh a long time, and many splits and mergers, to forge a party of which he is the undisputed boss," said a close aide. "He had joined hands with Kanshi Ram because he knows the latter will not interfere with him in UP. But others will."

Kanshi Ram has openly declared that if their combine wins, Mulayam Singh will rule UP. Similarly the support of the left parties with their very limited influence in UP is not likely to swing to Mulayam Singh, if the merger efforts cannot finally materialise. Mulayam Singh's visit to Calcutta on April 14, his long parleys with Jyoti Basu and the impressive reception he received there, have only emphasised the direction in which the left's sympathies are swinging.

"The JD(B)'s strategy is clearly to project Mulayam Singh as the biggest hurdle to unity," said Ram Saran Das. "That way they are trying to increase the pressure on us to unite on their terms." And indeed, when confronted by pressmen in Delhi on April 28, Mulayam Singh was forced to partially contradict most of his Lucknow statements saying that he was not opposed to an alliance with the other opposition groups. "We are not going to have anything to do with any party, except the BSP", he had told the scribes then.

V.P. Singh Divisive Force
93AS0882D Cochin THE WEEK in English
9 May 93 p 42

[Article by Rashmi Saksena: "Dump VP?"]

[Text] Preliminary moves by Janata Dal [JD] leaders to forge a broad front with old associates to defeat the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] at the hustings have, if anything else, generated turbulence within the Dal itself. Once again there has surfaced a polarisation of the Mandal fanatics and the rest of the leaders. More significantly, the unity efforts have been used by the initiators as an excuse to remove V.P. Singh from centre-stage.

V.P. Singh, stricken by a kidney ailment that keeps him from intensive touring, has provided ample opportunity to others to paint themselves as helmsmen. This, of course, has been resisted by those whose interest lies in keeping the Mandal issue as the party's main card.

Orissa Chief Minister Biju Patnaik who is the prime mover of talks with Chandra Shekhar, Mulayam Singh Yadav and Ajit Singh has given an impression that but for hostility against V.P. Singh, the unity formula would have worked out faster.

Biju feels that Mulayam Singh has reservations about V.P. Singh. On the other hand, Chandra Shekhar and Ajit Singh too have not come out with any concrete suggestions. V.P. Singh on his own has gone on record that individuals should not come in the way of unity efforts and if he is the stumbling block he will keep out.

Backed by Ramakrishna Hegde, Biju reportedly agreed enthusiastically to V.P. Singh's stand and went on to suggest that instead of waiting for Mulayam Singh to fall in line, they should go ahead and work things out with Shekhar and Ajit Singh.

This has led to a thinking within the party that efforts for a grand alliance should be in two phases. In the first round Biju, as the chief, should work out something that will make everyone united for the assembly elections in UP [Uttar Pradesh]. The second round will be to prepare for the parliamentary elections and then the leadership issue can be reviewed all over again.

This move has been strongly opposed by the likes of Sharad Yadav and Ram Vilas Paswan. The fact that both of them stayed away from the two-day Political Affairs Committee (PAC) meeting in April, for which Biju had flown in, is telling in itself.

Not only have these leaders made little of the unity efforts by Biju and Hegde but they feel that the Dal does not really need the support of Shekhar and Ajit Singh as

they barely help at the vote-gathering stage. As far as Mulayam goes, they hold that he will soon have no other option but to join the Dal if he wants to be the next chief minister of Uttar Pradesh. At the moment though, Mulayam is sure that he does not need anyone to help him. Says Sharad Yadav: "Mulayam is a tough bargainer but he will come around."

The Mandal supporters in the party fear that Biju's efforts will only make the Dal eventually emerge as a party of the "elite instead of being champions of the backwards and the downtrodden." They point out that Biju has openly spoken against reservation as recommended by Mandal and Ajit Singh's and Shekhar's views on this are also well known. "These votes are the mainstay of the party. We will lose them if we project the likes of Biju, Chandra Shekhar and Ajit Singh."

The Biju supporters in the party insist that the previous PAC had authorised Biju and Hegde to make efforts for a unity that is imperative in the present scenario. It is only as a follow-up that Patnaik has established contacts with Chandra Shekhar, Ajit Singh and Mulayam Singh. Though V.P. Singh and Shekhar have reportedly met often to discuss the issue, Mulayam Singh has said that Biju is the first man from the Dal to contact him and talk about getting together. However, he has ruled out any merger with the Dal and anything else he says will be decided only in consultation with his present ally Kanshi Ram, chief of the Bahujan Samaj Party.

While Biju has decided to keep working for the much-needed unity, Sharad Yadav has drawn up plans to tour extensively to show the sort of support the Dal has among the backwards and the Muslims.

The tense relations between Sharad Yadav and Mulayam Singh are no secret. They date back to the days of H.N. Bahuguna. Sharad's UP tour programme may well be to underplay the Mulayam factor. Insiders, however, point out that the cat and mouse game between the Dal and Mulayam will continue till the UP elections are actually announced.

The JD leaders agree on one point at least. They are sure that they can fight and defeat the BJP only by coming together as one force. If they remain on their own, they will retain the number two slot but nothing beyond. The others like Chandra Shekhar and Ajit Singh also know that they cannot go to the polls and emerge with something substantial on their own. But for the moment no one is in a hurry to work out anything concrete. The only disadvantage in this according to some leaders is that such an alliance, if it comes too near the elections, will go down with the people merely as an arrangement to catch votes.

RSS General Secretary Interviewed on Theocratic State

93AS0881H Calcutta SUNDAY in English
15 May 93 p 27

[Interview with Rajendra Singh by Nirmal Mitra: "We Are Against a Theocratic State"; place and date not given; italicized words as published]

[Text] *Prof. Rajendra Singh, popularly known as Rajju Bhaiya within the sangh parivar, is the general secretary of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). But more important, he is the man who calls the shots in the banned organisation. These days, Rajju Bhaiya spends most of his time at the Delhi headquarters of the RSS, unmindful of the policemen posted at the gates. "The RSS," he asserts, "is involved in cultural and humanitarian work, and at best a source of inspiration to its allies." Prof. Singh spoke to SUNDAY recently on wide-ranging subjects. Excerpts:*

SUNDAY: The *sangh parivar* seems to be torn apart from within: there are the rabid elements like the sadhus and *sants* of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and there are the more moderate elements in the BJP. How do you reconcile the two faces of the *sangh parivar*?

Rajendra Singh: We have had a long relationship with the sadhus and *sants*. Firstly, we have an association called the VHP, in which we have some workers. The VHP felt the need to start the Ram Janmabhoomi movement. The sadhus were approached. They jointed the VHP and went on many *yatras*.

But yes, some sadhus have been making statements which run contrary to the views of other members of the *parivar*. For instance, the sadhus have been saying that Mathura and Kashi are on our agenda. But the BJP leadership has made it clear that they are not on our agenda.

We are thoroughly against a theocratic state. But sometimes, in the course of our exchanges, we forget that. People get the impression that if the BJP came to power, the result would be a theocracy and the writ of the sadhus would run. True, they have among them persons like Avaidyanathji and Chinmayanandji. But they got elected in special circumstances. And it isn't that only sadhus have got elected from Uttar Pradesh. There are others like Sakshiji from Mathura and (Vinay) Katiyar from Faizabad.

Q: The general impression is that within the *sangh parivar*, it's the RSS which calls the shots...

A: On matters pertaining to politics, economic policy and welfare of kisans, the BJP is the deciding factor. We help them out on things like collecting signatures on the resolution demanding that a temple be built within the *garba griha*.

The central government is also trying to mobilise religious persons through Chandra Swami. But the important sadhus and *sants* of this country have total trust in us.

Q: On the issue of the temple, all sections of the *sangh parivar* are working together. But there are differences over economic policies. Whose word is it that counts?

A: Broadly speaking, the RSS is for *swadeshi*, economic decentralisation, greater employment, and against multi-nationals. But the BJP has its own line and we do not see the need to influence the party. At the most, we might sit together and discuss things.

Q: A large number of English-speaking liberals are joining the BJP. How do you explain the trend?

A: To them, the BJP represents a clarity of thought. They find it refreshing that there are no internal bickerings. They find the party very disciplined. Why else would Girilal Jain, who at one time spoke for the Congress, take the side of the BJP? (smiles).

And Arun Shourie, too. Once, *The Times of India's* Dileep Padgaonkar came to meet me and told me that four of his uncles were in the RSS. He had come back from Israel, and was full of praise for that nation. Although it is small, and surrounded by enemies, it could keep its identity intact. We, too, shall not give Muslims any second-rate treatment, but we will not be taken advantage of, either.

Q: But isn't the entry of politicians from other parties and non-RSS persons diluting the identity of the *sangh parivar*?

A: If we don't take people from outside, how do we expand? But we screen everyone who comes in.

Former BJP Chief Minister Said Courting Muslims

93AS0881G Calcutta SUNDAY in English 15 May 93 p 42

[Article by Sarat Chandra: "All in the Game: Kalyan Singh Tries to Woo Muslims at His Benares Rally"; italicized words as published]

[Text] If they are campaigning, it must be Benares. While elections in Uttar Pradesh—where the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] government was dismissed following the demolition of the Babri Masjid on 6 December—are still a far way off, different political parties are already busy testing their ground. And they are trying to gauge the mood in Benares as if the holy city was the right barometer for reading their popularity in UP [Uttar Pradesh].

Of late, the Mulayam Singh Yadav-Kanshi Ram duo has been hyper-active and the former chief minister and rising star of the BJP, Kalyan Singh, has not lagged behind in getting into the act of revamping his mass contact.

The initial series of Mulayam-Kanshi Ram rallies in parts of central and eastern UP did not seem to bother Singh. But the successful rallies jointly organised by the Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) at the historic Benia Bagh grounds in Benares on 28 March prompted the BJP leader to take the plunge.

But even before the BJP came to feel the pulse of the masses in one of the holiest of places for the Hindus, Janata Dal leaders such as V.P. Singh and Laloo Prasad Yadav had done their rounds on 9 April.

So the BJP came in a big way on 25 April to counter the political offensive launched by SP-BSP combine and the Janata Dal against the BJP's brand of politics. Benia Bagh reverberated with cheers when Kalyan Singh stood up to address a large gathering. Surely, even Singh had not been expecting the kind of response he got. For, it was here that even superstar Shatrughan Sinha was forced to abandon a rally following violence in 1991. Benia Bagh has Muslim-dominated localities on three sides.

Muslims, however, did not join these rallies in large numbers. Yet, the overall gatherings at the SP-BSP rally and that of Kalyan Singh were impressive and about the same, while V.P. Singh and Laloo failed to draw even half as much.

But by certain yardsticks, Kalyan Singh appeared to have put up a better show than his rivals. First, Singh held the rally virtually alone (neither any national BJP leader nor the state party president Kalraj Misra turned up); while both the SP-BSP and the Janata Dal shows had the participation of national-level heavyweights of the respective parties.

Besides, the crowd in Benares on 25 April was essentially local. In case of the SP-BSP and Janata Dal meetings, on the other hand, people had been brought in from the neighbouring districts.

The success of his meetings has been a big morale booster to Kalyan Singh, despite a bid by Indian People's Front (IPF) activists to stage a black-flag demonstration in Ghazipur and a futile attempt by some miscreants in Benares to disrupt the meeting by exploding a bomb barely 500 meters away from the venue. Apart from creating mild commotion, the blast did not cause any harm.

Interestingly, there was one thing in common between Mulayam and Kalyan Singh. Both the leaders considerably toned down their usual aggressiveness. And just as Mulayam did his best to woo both Muslims and Hindus, so did Kalyan, who repeatedly exhorted the Muslims to come out of their "shell" and join the national mainstream.

While reiterating his commitment to build the Ram temple at the disputed site in Ayodhya, Kalyan Singh made it clear that he was not against building the *masjid* outside the Panchkosi Parikrama (a five-mile circular road traversed by Hindu devotees as a ritual). And he went on to add: "If my Muslim brethren agree, I would be the first one to personally join them in building a grand mosque."

The BJP leader took care not to mention the local Gyanvapi Masjid-Vishwanath temple dispute, that is

often raised vociferously by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad [VHP]. In fact, he told SUNDAY that neither the Kashi Vishwanath temple nor Mathura's Krishna Janmabhoomi figured on the BJP's agenda.

In spite of the change in rhetoric, Kalyan Singh's rally proved one point for certain—that it was too early to say that the saffron was losing its sway in the cow belt.

Government Claimed Distorting Information on Kashmir Temples

93AS0881C New Delhi ORGANISER in English
16 May 93 pp 10, 14

[Quotation marks and italicized words as published]

[Text] A symposium on "Kashmir Temples—the real issues" was conducted by Save Kashmir Front at Himachal Bhavan in Delhi on 1-5-93. The participants, among others, included S/Shri Jagmohan, Kidar Nath Sahni, S.L. Shakdhar (Former Chief Election Commissioner), D.N. Munshi, Convenor, Save Kashmir Front and C.L. Gadoo. A photo exhibition of desecrated temples of Kashmir was also put up at the Bhavan.

K.N. Sahni

Shri Kidar Nath Sahni, senior BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader told that a vicious disinformation campaign is on to suppress news about destruction of temples in Kashmir. In the forefront of this campaign are some so-called responsible media persons. The Government of India, by its old habit of indifference to threat of Islamic fundamentalism, is also contributing its bit. Large-scale destruction of temples took place in 1986 but these forces played down the whole event. What is more shocking is the fact that when BJP sent a three members delegation and brought out truth in open, these elements confronted BJP's findings with lies and fabrications.

After reaching Kashmir in February 86 we met Farooq Abdullah and D.D. Thakur, the then Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister respectively. Farooq made light of the whole issue saying only one or two temples had suffered minor damage and that two had since been repaired. On visiting several villages we discovered that scores of temples were desecrated and were lying as such. At most of the villages people were ready with their luggage to flee. Not a single official or minister of J&K [Jammu and Kashmir] Government except the governor, Shri Jagmohan visited the spots for good two weeks. Coming back to my hotel in the evening I tried to tell Farooq that what he had said was plain bunkum. But he would not listen.

The strategem to suppress news of temple destruction, we soon realised, was so deep that the vested interest even tried to persuade us to stay in the very hotel room so that we fail to acquire first hand knowledge. But we had braced ourselves for it and surmounted the obstruction.

On our return we convened a press conference and described in vivid detail the destruction of temples and the agonies of people that we had witnessed in our extensive tour. But the news never appeared in print. We even wired, President, Vice-President, PM, Home Minister and Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee, but Vajpayee is yet to receive the telegram. I don't know about the others.

India Today wrote in an article that the BJP's claim of temple destruction is false and naming some temples (which we had found destroyed) it wrote that its reporter Ms. Baweja visited them and found them safe. I sent a rejoinder and gave pictures of the desecrated temples to Baweja in person but the magazine slept over it.

Such blatant lies do not behove responsible journalism. The 'story' of Varghese's findings is already famous. I wonder what they achieve by suppressing news. These media persons, by their lies and fabrication are misleading the State into complacency. Let the truth be known for then only can the rest of country act.

Jagmohan

Addressing the participants Shri Jagmohan said that he was approached once by some students in Gujarat who wanted to know the state of affairs in J&K in a few words. My answer was "truth had been laid astray in Kashmir". It is truth which has been butchered in Kashmir. Atrocities on the temples and Kashmiri Pandits are simply not reported.

From 1947 onwards the GOI [Government of India] has only tried to suppress news about Kashmir from the rest of the country. In 1986, though earlier I could not go, but what now I saw was shocking. Villagers were sitting with their luggage packed and the general refrain was: "What would we do staying here when our temples have been ruined?" They begged me to arrange for vehicles for they wanted to clear out of their ancestral home.

I sent a report describing the plight of the temples and the people to every important person back in Delhi but no one took notice. The truth was ignored. Soon President's rule was imposed and I became the in-charge of J&K. I got the temples repaired with Government sanction.

Now when insurgency has grown worse everyone seems confused. But from 1947 onwards the story of Kashmir has been one of overlooking the truth at the expense of State security. Sheikh Abdullah preached sedition but no one took notice. Al-Fateh, a terrorist organisation was busy in subversion but GOI looked away. After the Kashmir accord of 1975 Government inducted in police force those very people who were openly anti-Indian. In the test match in 1983 the dubious loyalties of such elements came to the fore but government overlooked it as an aberration.

It was no news that after 1970 a whole new generation was being taught and trained in terrorism. Anti-India propaganda and pro-Pakistani slogans were issued from

madarsas and mosques. During election time political speeches were made from these places. Government is now anxious to seek separation of politics from religion but under what compulsion did it fail to act in the case of Kashmir?

In 1990, when I went there as Governor, there was virtual collapse of administration. The entire State machinery was victim of subversion. Many top-ranking officials including police personnel of J&K were crossing the border to be trained in subversion. The shocking part was that they were using GOI funds, vehicles and telephones for subversive activities. I have mentioned names of many such State officials in my book. The jailer would arrange for the captive's escape and policemen would help the terrorist attacks. I began to remedy the situation and in the process dismissed many such anti-national employees. But the Press and the politicians sitting in ivory towers in Delhi were crying hoarse. They would say "Jagmohan Sahib is determined to drive away all Muslims from Kashmir." They branded me as a villain and a Muslim-hater.

But the same Jagmohan was praised to the sky during his last tenure (84-89). Then people would say that he was a *paighambar* from India who wanted to improve the quality of life in the valley. I developed road-systems, cleaned the lakes and brought about justice and fair play in administration. But suddenly I turned into a villain and Muslim hater! How come? Because I forced GOI to see the truth.

In his speeches, Farooq Abdullah talks of the need for international enquiry in certain cases in Kashmir. He does not trust the national government and has made no attempt to hide his mistrust. The same Farooq is today projected as hero and saviour of Kashmir by some vested interest. The Centre is talking of starting the political process. But how can a political process start when you have no government worth the name? Whoever from Kashmir is involved in talks with the Centre in the name of political settlement is shot dead the next day. Innocent people such as Maulvi Farooq, Dr. Guru are killed due to the unscrupulous government policy.

During my tenure things had improved beyond recognition. But many people had problems with that. They were amazed that Paki flags were no more seen on rooftops; that people had stopped shouting pro-Pakistan slogans. They soon began to invent stories of human rights violation. But where is the atrocity and where are the violations—I demand of them. No one has as yet come forward to substantiate the charge.

The saddest part was the response of the Centre which, despite knowing the fact did not act realistically. The so-called shooting by security personnel in the procession of Farooq Abdullah was ISI's [Inter-Service Intelligence] mischief and I proved it so but they would not listen. Removing me suited them politically and they chucked me out. It earned them a humane and friendly face in Bihar or Aligarh.

The *Current* fabricated an interview in which I reportedly vowed to finish Muslims in Kashmir. When I rose in Parliament to tell the truth I was not given the chance. When our Parliament can refuse to listen to truth where else can one turn?

I sued *Current* in the High Court for 20 lakh indemnity. The story was fabricated and it could not escape. It confessed its guilt, which was subsequently published in its issue of 6-5-92. I did not pursue them to pay me the 20 lakh but it paid the court fees at the direction of the High Court!

While in America some people asked me: "Are you the same Jagmohan who made many Kashmiri pandits flee from the valley?" I wondered at their source of information. They told me that in *India Abroad* one Kuldip Nayyer has said so!

I apprehended all the culprits in Mufti Moharamad's daughter's abduction case. We appointed a designated court in Jammu since in Srinagar you never know what would happen. But not even one case has been successfully pursued. Instead, the first thing they did after I left was to dissolve the court. In the span of three years not a single culprit has been prosecuted under TADA [Terrorism and Disruptive Activities]. All that I had achieved has been undone since then. In 1992, 4000 cases of attack on security personnel were reported. An average 14-15 terrorist related cases of violence are reported daily.

S.L. Shakder

Shri S.L. Shakder, said in his presidential address that GOI is behaving like a weak and juvenile government so far as Kashmir is concerned. The government takes ad hoc decisions which is marked by sharp difference of opinion in its ranks. Union Home Minister expresses one thing and Minister of State for Internal Security, another.

The Muslim community, though never tired of demanding minority protection for themselves is curiously silent over the fate of the Hindu minority in Kashmir. When I led a delegation to PM, his junior minister, Shri Rajesh Pilot, strangely enough, demanded proof of temple destruction from me. Overcome with disgust I reminded him that it was his job to find out the truth. The open rebellion by Jammu and Kashmir Armed Police (JKPA) has exposed the weakness of the government on the one hand and the strength of anti-national forces on the other.

C.L. Gadoo

Shri C.L. Gadoo, Chairman of Save Kashmir Front, said that there are very few people in the country who call a spade a spade. We have taken care to invite only those speakers who have the guts to speak the truth.

Under a sinister design, 18,000 homes of Kashmiri pandits were gutted. Their temples, properties are being

destroyed. The fundamentalists are bent upon removing all our symbols and destroying our roots. But we promise you all that we will go back to Kashmir, what may come.

D.N. Munshi

D.N. Munshi told that there was a deliberate design to desecrate symbols of Hindus. Media men and the government are also not lagging behind. When confronted with irrefutable facts these people begin mixing up dates and places of the events. Temple desecration is but symptom of the anti-national conspiracy. The real issue is insurgency and if GOI does not wake up Kashmir will slip out of India.

Two books were released on the occasion, one edited by Devendra Swaroop and the other by Satyanand Kaul 'Premi', who has translated the *Gita* into Urdu. S/Shri Jagmohan and Kidar Nath Sahni respectively released the volumes.

CPM Term 'Big Brother' Using 'Arrogance of Power'

93AS0881B Calcutta THE STATESMAN
in English 17 May 93 p 8

[Editorial: "Countryside Conflicts"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] Whatever some dissenting partners of the Left Front might think of their influence in some pockets of West Bengal, the panchayat elections have proved again that there is no getting away from Big Brother's bull-dozing methods in establishing a durable fiefdom in the countryside. The sorry state of the panchayats and of rural life in general have made no difference to the CPI(M)'s [Communist Party of India (Marxist)] vote bank, and Mr. Jyoti Basu did not really have to be worried about the murmurs of protest from the RSP [Revolutionary Socialist Party]. If the international seminar on the validity of Marxism has taught the party anything, it is that it can rely on its own methods of keeping dissenters in place and compelling junior partners like the CPI to accept the crumbs that are offered. The CPI, hopelessly divided as it is and becoming increasingly irrelevant, has learnt that it is pointless to make ugly noises like the RSP and Forward Bloc when the CPI(M) speaks from an unassailable position. But, if the CPI's official group is not as vocal about Midnapore after the expulsion of Mr. Narayan Choubey who nursed the party's traditional base, the RSP has every reason to be worried about the CPI(M)'s subtle attempts to wrest some areas of North Bengal from the Front's junior partner. Obviously, principles do not count; nor does the formula worked out by Mr. Sailen Dasgupta, the Front chairman, to sustain the pretence of Left unity. For all practical purposes, the "friendly contests" being spoken of are meant to be another warning to dissenters and a means of expanding the CPI(M)'s domain in the districts.

The tragedy is that the CPI(M) can get away with such muscle power and deceit after the early benefits of Operation Barga were negated by the spectre of poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and lack of basic health, irrigation and primary education facilities. All this now comes with the disturbing proportions of corruption and politicization of rural development. Having had a free run of the local administration for 16 years, the CPI(M) can now scoff at the West Bengal Congress(I)'s proposal for people's power at the grassroots level when the PCC(I) is clearly incapable of offering any kind of political challenge. The people, in the CPI(M)'s eyes, mean only those leaning towards the Left and, if they do, they are not obliged to discharge their basic responsibilities as gram pradhans, teachers who attend classes only by chance, and health workers unconcerned that the local centres have no supplies of medicines. The arrogance of power prompts the party to subordinate rural development to the profound Marxist objective of resisting the communal forces represented by the BJP [Bharatiya Janata party]. The CPI(M) must be feeling reassured that neither the rumblings within the Front nor the secret alignments reported to have taken place between the Congress(I) and BJP in some areas are of much consequence. Another round of promises can constitute the opium of the people when ignorance and misery are no more than instruments of political domination.

Congress (I) Deterioration Seen Responsible for BJP Growth

*93AS0884B Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA
in Bengali 20 May 93 p 4*

[Article by Ashish Ghosh: "When Will Congress Understand That Their Fight With BJP Will Be for Their Own Existence"]

[Text] The biggest news for the time being of this Panchayat [village council] election is the Congress-BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] alliance. Whatever might be happening at the higher level, and how many useless debates are being held on principles and theory, this alliance has taken place at a number of places at the lowest level. These two parties have divided the seats among themselves openly in some places and secretly in other, and they have also chosen the candidates after doing calculations.

Not much curiosity exists in the market this time about the outcome of the Panchayat election. Noticing the condition of the main opposition party, the people are becoming more sure about the outcome. Side by side, for various reasons, the conflicts and clashes in the Left Front are considerably less this time. Is it difficult to guess the fate of this joint contest? Not more than 10 days are left before the election. Even those who were very optimistic are not saying much after noticing the trend in the Congress Party campaign. In the three-tier Panchayat elections, for the first time in 1978 the Congress Party received 29.26 percent of the seats; the

second time, it won 32.32 percent; and in the third in 1988, the seats for the Congress stood at 22.61 percent. There is no indication that this trend might change to some extent in the fourth Panchayat election this time. There was terror and rigging in voting; this explanation they could extend at least for three times. Since the last legislative and the Lok Sabha elections the theory that the BJP snatched the votes has been added. Therefore, any one can now practically guess what the state Congress Party would say about the outcome of the Panchayat elections to be held in the beginning of June.

Perhaps for this reason there is no excitement or interest among the common people for this Panchayat election, and also no discussions on it are taking place anywhere. The last time the discord in the Left Front reached a serious height. The newspapers daily published big reports on the statements and speeches of the ministers and leaders who were partners in the Left Front. The top heads of the Forward Bloc and the RSP [Revolutionary Socialist Party] kept the market hot with fresh and exciting statements. The situation was such that even questions were raised as to whether the Left Front was going to survive. The Congress Party even presented a petition to the governor along with copies of statements of ministers about the non-existence of the Left Front and so asked him to dismiss the government. All in all, political tensions were widespread at the time. But this time they are no more. The smaller partners practically did not open their mouths this time on the differences that remained within the Left Front. On the contrary, they are noticing with surprise that their bigger partners are mostly serious and sincere on the unity issue. The state leaders made their strongest efforts at many places to achieve this unity. Thus, the possibility of getting anxious is also comparatively less this time.

But in this lifeless market whatever little interest is visible is about how many seats the BJP will get. If anything called the wind of votes now exists in rural Bengal, then it is the BJP. Even when the BJP did not secure any seats in the last Legislative Assembly election, its results in a large number of districts were thoroughly amazing. In many seats, they were second leaving the Congress Party behind. Thus, discussions on the BJP are going on in West Bengal this time and commentaries have appeared on the possibilities of the BJP's doing better in some districts. Even the name of the BJP is constantly being heard from the lips of the Left Front leaders. The situation was not like this only a few days ago. Then there was no need to take the BJP into account, which is now being done. All the parties are keeping their eyes on the lotus [BJP symbol] and after getting that importance all of a sudden, the BJP leaders are saying anything and everything to keep their market hot. They are openly fanning communalism and threatening the Muslim minority. Never before this time, has there been an election propaganda plainly on communal lines in rural Bengal. The state branch of the largest opposition party in India is making the market hot by uttering boundless lies in an unrestrained manner, and

there is no doubt that even if they cannot capture a large number of rural Panchayats, they will get a substantial number of seats in these village councils. The candidates with the BJP symbol won only 3 Panchayat committees and 36 rural Panchayat seats in the last elections. This time their position has changed.

This situation has changed mainly due to the Congress Party. The role of this century-old party in containing the BJP adventure was suspicious from beginning to end. What has the state Congress Party done besides publishing sometimes drab statements in papers or staging showy stay-in passive resistance movements? Has it conducted any political propaganda or adopted any continuous program? Has it made the voters, who support them, understand why the BJP is a danger? On the contrary, the Congress members quarreled among themselves on whether or not they should say anything against the BJP. On one side, the Mamata followers are advancing by adopting the line of Jotin Chakraborti. In their opinion for ousting the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] there should be a close affinity with the BJP. Those who do not accept this theory are melons and friends of the CPI-M. The Congressmen who follow this line, have either quietly withdrawn themselves from voting this time or deceiving the Congress Party by standing in the elections shaking hands with the BJP.

The Somen followers—another faction in the Congress Party—are observing a strange silence in regard to the BJP, perhaps fearing that, if they talk more about the BJP, they will be given further publicity as melons. On the contrary, very recently the leaders of the official state Congress Party were sitting with a type of self-satisfaction that the BJP would not be able to do anything. Because of their lack of activity, the Congress foundation has leaned toward the BJP in villages. The BJP has received more candidates and workers only from the Congress Party. The BJP men speaking eloquently about the Congress-CPI-M alliance, were able to put themselves up as an alternative to the Congress Party. Only at this point, is there a strange similarity in the campaign between the Mamata followers and the BJP. The two sides are propagating that Narasimha Rao has understandings with Jyoti Basu, and Rao has handed over Tripura to the CPI-M. Therefore, to save their lives, the dejected lower ranking Congress workers are opting for the BJP. This is what is happening in state politics since the last legislative assembly election. As grounds are slowly sliding away under the feet of the Congress Party, the miserable look of the party is largely being exposed. Taking lessons from the last Legislative Assembly election, the Congress has failed to present itself as a respectable integrated party in this election. On the contrary, the fear among the people supporting the Congress Party has increased from the talks of the Congress leaders. They are becoming more hesitant with larger publication of news on the Congress-BJP alliance, and also getting confused with the difference between the hand [Congress Party election symbol] and the lotus.

In this situation any responsible political party will evaluate its own position, and consider the ways and means to contain erosion. Without marching on that path, they are now saying, on the contrary, with pride that the BJP could not give candidates for all the seats, and so their votes will be reduced. In other words, as if the Congress Party and all the people in the state had presumed that the BJP would furnish 71,000 candidates—at least that is what BJP should supply. One thing these wise Congressmen forget is that in the last Panchayat election, the party known as the BJP could send only 2,136 candidates for 62,306 seats, with its own symbol. The Congress leaders also time and again reminded the journalists that, because of the BJP, they lost about 100 Legislative Assembly seats last year. Why is there a tendency to consider as a trifle thing the danger coming from a party that shook the foundation of the Congress in such a manner within two years? Perhaps the Congress leaders are not realizing the danger or are trying to pose as though they do not realize it. When are the Congressmen going to understand the simple fact that the fight against the BJP is not merely for voting, it is all along a political struggle and is very important for their own existence?

Government Ban of RSS Seen Ineffective Against 'Fundamentalism'

93AS0884A *Calcutta ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA*
in Bengali 20 May 93 p 4

[Editorial: "Careless Indiscretion"]

[Text] The Allahabad High Court has dismissed the prohibitory order against the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh [RSS]. The court has given this verdict because the Illegal Activities Prevention Tribunal did not lawfully declare or register in an official gazette this government prohibitory order. From that viewpoint of logic, the court has dismissed the prohibitory order entirely for a mistake in technical details. There is no reason to consider this court award as a defeat for the government or a victory for the RSS. Needless to say, the other members of the Sangh family, including the RSS, are doing the same thing. The RSS spokesman said that the court order has proved that only for officially making the minority communities happy the government has illegally banned the Hindu organizations. It goes without saying that this RSS explanation is wrong. The court's verdict did not prove at all any such thing. Moreover, the government also did not ban any one by selectively making the other one happy; the fundamentalist organizations belonging to the minority communities were also banned simultaneously and that order is still in force. The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leaders said that after the Ayodhya episode Narasimha Rao lost his power of making correct decisions and this has been proved by the court's verdict; so the Rao government should resign. Again a wrong interpretation. Also, no such thing was proved by the Allahabad High Court verdict. If there is anything worth saying in the verdict, that in substance

is—government's callousness and an unpardonable carelessness prior to taking an important decision.

The members of the Sangh family, including the RSS and BJP, have expressed a kind of great delight and optimism about the court verdict, but, in fact, the court itself did not show any such ray of hope. Over and above, lots of evidential proofs are available about the involvement of the three banned fundamentalist organizations—the RSS, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Bajrang Party—in the crime for which these organizations were banned after the demolition of the Babri Mosque. The work of the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation], which was conducting the investigation in this regard, is nearly over, and it has been learned from this organizational source that there existed a definite premeditated plan for the demolition of the mosque. The three fundamentalist organizations maintained a regular cohesion in their program for the success of this secret plot, and documents to this effect have come to the hands of the intelligence department. After it is proved that the RSS, the Bajrang Party, and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad had an overall plan to create country-wide communal tension and bloodshed by demolishing the Babri mosque in a pre-planned manner, the dismissal order of the Allahabad High Court will not be able to save their face, because this order is not helping the Sangh family to erase its bad reputation as fundamentalist conspirators. In this sphere, the subject under consideration in the court and the evil deeds of the Sangh family are two entirely different matters. The RSS and the BJP leaders intentionally and with definite motives made evil attempts to confuse the two different issues and make them as one similar thing. The court has not said even once that the RSS is not fundamentalist or it is not responsible for the demolition of the mosque and country-wide communal bloodshed. The court has only commented on the validity of the issuance of the prohibitory order.

In fact, we have also expressed doubts in the past on whether by banning a fundamentalist organization it is possible to crush its sinister activities. We have already said earlier that banning cannot crush widespread organizations like the RSS; over and above, they acquire to some extent the status of martyrs after the government authorities ban them, and by going underground, disappearing from the open stage, they start expanding their own organizations and influence at a much faster rate. Banning cannot wipe out any doctrine; it is better to launch a theoretical struggle against it. The way to weaken political fundamentalism is not by banning the fundamentalist organizations, but to contest them face-to-face with the help of the politics of secularism. The RSS spokesman has himself said that nothing has been gained by the government or the secular forces by banning the RSS; their branches have remained active like before, and by recruiting new volunteers they have indoctrinated them in the concept of fundamentalism. Because of the prohibitory orders a few orders of its offices in urban regions were put under lock and key and

some papers were confiscated, but all other activities of the organization continued uninterrupted. If the ruling party and its associate secular forces in this matter had devoted their attention to the campaign of political secularism and educated the people with the concept of love and amity, rather than marching on the administrative path of issuing prohibitory orders, then there was some possibility of cornering the fundamentalist organizations. Without doing such a thing, the fallacy of fulfilling their responsibility toward the principles of secularism by issuing prohibitory orders has today dropped them into their own loopholes. Still there is time. The fundamentalist organizations have not yet been able to fully recover from the shock of adverse reactions to the Ayodhya episode. All secular parties and organizations in the country should, without spending any more time, launch an ideological and political struggle against fundamentalism.

Advani Seen Most Representative Leader for BJP

93AS0881D Bombay THE ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY OF INDIA in English 21 May 93 p 33

[Article by Swapan Dasgupta: "The Siege Within"; italicized words and quotation marks as published]

[Text] Unlike the Congress which is quite happy waging its factional wars in full public view, the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] has the enviable record of resolving its internal contradictions quietly and discreetly. True, there have been aberrations like the time when Pandit Mauli Chand Sharma, a president of the Jan Sangh, was unceremoniously expelled in the early '50s and when Balraj Madhok was dumped in the early '70s. But these bouts of bloodletting have been few and far between and, priding itself on its attachment to *anushashan*, the Sangh parivar has followed a strict hierarchical command structure.

There is nothing, as yet, to suggest that this aspect of RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh]-training has broken down irretrievably. But in the past few years, the commonality of purpose has certainly come under strain and even found reflection in the media.

In many ways, the tenure of Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi as president has been a turning point. When the high priests of Nagpur chose Joshi to succeed L.K. Advani as BJP chief in 1991, there was the assumption that he would grow in office. Tragically for them, that optimism has been misplaced. It is not merely that Joshi lacked Advani's strategic astuteness, but that he was a man in a desperate hurry to emerge as a national leader on par with Advani and Atal Behari Vajpayee.

This reckless haste proved counter-productive. In trying to show that he was boss, Joshi rubbed the entire younger leadership of the BJP the wrong way. The events leading to Govindacharya's exile to Madras was the first indication that all was not well in the state of Ashok Road. But on that occasion, Joshi found unexpected allies in Vajpayee and other senior leaders who were miffed with

Govindacharya's casual attitude to hierarchy. Unfortunately, Joshi was not content to let matters rest at that. In his bid to establish factional dominance, he unsettled the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh and promoted a revolt of Brahmin MLAs [Member of Legislative Assembly] against Kalyan Singh. The move did not prove popular and forced the RSS leadership to finally intervene. At the Bhubaneswar session of the national executive in November last year, an informal decision was taken to replace Joshi gracefully, although the choice of successor was left open.

The traumatic events of December 6 upset all calculations. With the RSS and the VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad] banned, the BJP state governments dismissed, and restrictions put in the way of the party's operations, organisational elections were suspended. On his part, Joshi exploited the impasse by adopting a hawkish posture which, while endearing him to the hard-core, proved tactically insufficient to cope with the challenge. After the thwarted February 25 rally in Delhi, the BJP leadership concluded that it was going to be a long haul and that the Congress would not easily oblige the BJP by calling an early election. The new agenda called for nimble footwork which Joshi was unlikely to provide.

This period of waiting has reopened the question of leadership and the old grievances against Joshi were quick to resurface. The latter did not help matters by attempting to stall organisational elections and encouraging his supporters to lobby quite openly for a second term. He succeeded to the extent that Ashok Singhal, the chief of the banned VHP, and Dattopant Thengdi, the head of the pro-Swadeshi lobby and the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, came to his help in the Sangh parivar. But the other stalwarts were unwilling to oblige. At this moment, when the very future of the RSS was at stake, they were firmly committed to a leader who would be able to deliver electorally. And, under no circumstances, did Joshi fit the bill. At Calcutta, he was, in effect, served notice.

The initial calculation of the anti-Joshi lobby—before December 6 changed the ground rules—was that Vajpayee would resume his role as president and together with Advani, who would remain leader of the Opposition and shadow prime minister, present an old and tested combination.

Vajpayee's public expression of sorrow over the demolition of the Babri shrine jolted the party. The guarded responses of the leadership to the demolition notwithstanding, the fact remains that the vast majority of party supporters endorse the action unequivocally. There is also a parallel belief that a full-blooded offensive centred on assertive Hindutva will enable the party to make electoral inroads against the Congress. This section feels that there is no need to temper the BJP ideology to suit the English-speaking classes since they will be opposed to the party regardless.

It is this sentiment which has put a big question mark on the choice of Vajpayee as the successor to Joshi. Apart from the hardliners, an influential section of the VHP, namely Ashok Singhal, Swami Vamdev and even, it is said, Sadhvi Rithambara, have firmly opposed any move to make Vajpayee the BJP chief.

On his part, Vajpayee has acted coy. Realising that the RSS no longer has unqualified faith in his political judgement, he has let it be known that it would be useless to function as party president in these circumstances.

Which is why there is renewed pressure on Advani to combine the role of party president with his status as leader of the Opposition. The younger and more 'modern' elements in the party are firmly rooting for Advani as the only person who combines tactical astuteness with a mass appeal. Advani, they feel, is the only leader who can combine the political and religious dimensions of Hindutva and bring it into sharp focus.

The traditionalists in the Sangh are *per se* not unfavourably disposed towards the suggestion, but they have a mental block towards accepting the position that one leader is almost indispensable. This emerging leadership cult runs against the grain of the RSS culture, where every person is merely a *swayamsevak*. It is for this reason that the name of Kalyan Singh has been floated.

As yet, it is difficult to envisage what the future will unfold, but three points are in order. First, whatever happens, the main tactical and ideological inputs will be provided by Advani. Irrespective of whether or not he is made president, he will be the supremo of the BJP in the coming years. Vajpayee will retain his status as a favoured orator and he may even be given formal charge of the BJP in the Lok Sabha. But this will merely be sanctifying his new status as an elder statesman rather than a functioning leader.

Secondly, there is every likelihood of the BJP effecting major organisational changes to ensure that control of the party machinery is firmly in the hands of a low-profile general secretary. The name of Sundar Singh Bhandari is being mentioned in this context to retain a semblance of the cadre-based approach at a time when the party has virtually become a disparate, mass movement.

Finally, the BJP is going through a bitter generational conflict whereby those who were in the forefront of the Jan Sangh are finding their assumptions being questioned. Unused to dealing with a mass movement of this magnitude, many of them have taken shelter behind a small-group mentality which emphasises ideological purity against pragmatism. Bhaura Deoras was one of the few RSS' leaders who grasped this trend and made attempts to refashion the party in a 'modern' garb, shedding RSS orthodoxy. With his death, the process of change has been stalled. But there is little doubt that problem will return time and again. For, ultimately, the 13-year-old party is still undergoing the pangs of adolescence.

The *samudra manthan* of Ayodhya could even force the pace of early maturity.

Paper on Indo-U.S. Dialogue on Human Rights
BK2606084993 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English
19 Jun 93 p 8

[Editorial: "The Indo-U.S. Dialogue"]

[Text] This year's debate in the U.S. House of Representatives on the issue of human rights in India has shown a welcome willingness on the part of a majority of the lawmakers to take duly into account the merits of this country's case. The trend contrasts sharply with what happened last year when the hysterical anti-Indian lobby led by Dan Burton managed to get an amendment indicting India passed in the House by 210 to 200 votes. He did so by wild charges of large-scale violations of human rights in Kashmir and Punjab and grossly distorting the issues at stake in these two states. His amendment to the Foreign Assistance Bill of 1993, however, was defeated in the House by 233 to 201 votes on Wednesday.

True, the next day, the same House accepted an amendment moved by the Democratic member, David Obey to the U.S. Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill whereby the total assistance to all developing countries is to be reduced, with India presumably entitled to get only \$4.1 million instead of \$41 million as originally proposed. The India-baiters supported it clearly because they regarded it as at least an implicit censure of India. That they refrained from demanding a specific mention of India in this amendment, however, suggested a shift,

even if tactical, in recognition of the better climate (from New Delhi's point of view) in the House. Likewise, another amendment reducing the International Military Education and Training Funding for India (again a token disapproval of its human rights record) was adopted along with many others without any discussions because of lack of time. Perhaps, a debate might have produced a different result. The most significant sign that an increasing number of Congressmen are prepared to take a balanced approach to the human rights issue in India was the strong criticism of Dan Burton's amendment. The two leading Congressmen, Lee Hamilton and Garry Ackerman pointed out that the amendment sought to fault only the Indian government while allowing the militants in Punjab and Kashmir to go scot-free. Hamilton said that the Pakistan government which was aiding the militants was also to blame. Apparently, the frank exchanges which have taken place between Indian officials and non-official experts on the one hand and their U.S. counterparts on the other in recent weeks, have paid dividends.

The Indian Ambassador, Siddhartha Shankar Ray has, for instance, taken pains to put the events in Kashmir in proper perspective at his meetings on Capitol Hill. Similarly, the discussion at the Asia Society seminar was helpful. There, George Verghese, former Editor of INDIAN EXPRESS, gave a cogent reply to charges against India made by Patricia Grossman of Asia Watch. After stressing the fact that India was a democracy, he pointed out that outsiders had given sanctuary to Kashmiri militants and supplied arms that outgunned the security forces, thus paralysing the very democratic process with which the situation could have been handled to better effect.

'Tremendous' Scope for Trade With Central Asia
93AS0845A New Delhi PATRIOT in English
13 Apr 93 p 5

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] Pune, April 12 (UNI)—There is tremendous scope for Indian industry to have trade links with the new Central Asian Republics (CIS) of Kazakhstan, Kryghzstan and Uzbekistan who are shifting from a regimented system to a market economy, according to a delegation of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

According to the delegation which visited the republics recently, these republics have an abundance of natural resources which the Indian industry with its technology and financial resources could convert into value added products, thereby becoming a partner in the development process.

Mr R D Aga, who led the delegation, said the biggest handicap in this direction was lack of business data at the micro level.

The delegation visited the three republics with an objective to establish contact with their governments and industry and also to explore the possibilities of strengthening business ties, Mr Aga said.

He said the mission interacted with Tysrusbek Cygnyshov, Premier of Kyrgyzstan, G A Abilsyitov Deputy Premier and Minister for Science and New Technologies Said Safaev, Minister of Foreign Affairs and M Rustombekov, first Deputy Foreign Trade Minister of Uzbekistan among other important dignitaries.

The delegation in its report has suggested that the Indian embassy, jointly with a body like the CII, commission a consultant to compile a trade directory for exchange of information and opportunities.

Mr Aga said there was a tremendous opportunity by way of recycling of wastes in the metallurgical and chemical industries in the three republics as in the erstwhile command economies, technological limitations and the eagerness to achieve targets irrespective of costs have led to accumulation of wastes.

Describing the mission's visit as a voyage of discovery, Mr Aga said the buzz word in three Central Asian Republics was joint venture and they (individuals and organisations) are keen to join hands, that in the absence of a market mechanism, the pricing of inputs and outputs would be a subject of negotiation.

In all the three republics, Mr Aga said pharmaceuticals and baby foods stood on the priority list of imports in view of tremendous shortage.

About 30 to 40 per cent of the international trade in these republics is done through barter, which includes counter-trade, barter is certainly not the most efficient

way of doing business, and it is further compounded by a system where pricing is arbitrary and does not follow market norms, he said.

Therefore, there is an opportunity for CII members to set up an international counter-trade organisation, he said.

Ministry Reports Widening Trade Deficit

93AS0840A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 14 Apr 93 p 17

[Text] New Delhi, April 13 (PTI)—The country's trade deficit during the first eleven months of 1992-93, the inaugural year of the eighth plan has zoomed to a staggering Rs [Rupees] 10,068.06 crores (April 1992 to February 1993), against Rs 3,986.79 crores in the corresponding period of 1991-92.

Figures released today by the commerce ministry showed exports during April, 1992 to February, 1993 at Rs 47,233.62 crores, while imports are Rs 57,301.68 crores, leaving a trade deficit of Rs 10,068.06 crores.

The country's aggregate exports in \$ terms during April-February 1992-93 are estimated at \$16,440.75 million as against \$15,990.90 million during April-February 1991-92, showing a growth of 2.81 per cent. Imports during April-February 1992-93 are \$19,945.17 million as against \$17,628.53 million, showing a growth rate of 13.4 per cent.

The trade deficit during April-February 1992-93 is estimated at \$3,504.42 million, as compared to \$1,637.63 million during April-February 1991-92.

A redeeming feature in the country's foreign trade performance is that exports to the General Currency Area (GCA) valued at \$15,847.53 million during April-February 1992-93, as against \$14,344.56 million during April-February 1991-92, a growth rate of 10.48 per cent.

Handloom Sector: Center Initiates Relief

93AS0809A Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English 21 Apr 93 p 8

[Text] In an attempt to stem the deteriorating living standards of handloom weavers the Centre has come out with a Rs [Rupees] 1,321 crore package of five schemes for the decentralised sector of the textile industry. Four of them are to be financed by outlays from the Integrated Rural Development Programme and other such schemes of the Ministry of Rural Development. With the 62 per cent increase in the outlay for rural development in the present financial year a new package has become possible. The fifth scheme, to cost Rs. 639 crore and which will cover the establishment of 3,000 handloom development centres and 500 dyeing units, is awaiting clearance from the Finance Ministry. Altogether, some 325,000 weavers are to benefit from the five schemes. The handloom sector has been increasingly squeezed between the mills and the powerlooms. While the mills have concentrated on the upper end of the market, the

powerlooms—the fastest growing segment—have captured the lower and middle segments. With the handloom sector becoming increasingly marginalised—there have been occasionally reports of starvation deaths as well—a new package has become imperative. But the question is how much this fresh effort will achieve. There have been many attempts in the past (with product reservation, concessional finance and marketing programmes) to protect weavers. But none of them have succeeded either because they are not administered properly or the powerloom sector has encroached on to the areas reserved for the handloom sector.

The new package has features very similar to ones made in the past. Programmes for providing looms, training of weavers and establishment of facilities that can be shared by weavers have all been carried out in the past. One new component—to provide yarn with a guarantee that woven products will be bought back—could make a difference. But a number of government committees have accepted the view that whatever the product handlooms do not have a future since they can no longer compete in either price or quality. The suggestion is that they should carve out a niche for themselves in specialised products in the export and domestic markets. But such markets can support no more than a small proportion of weavers. Perhaps the only feasible solution is to help weavers become powerloom owner-cum-operators. But there again without State support in financing and marketing they will not be able to survive.

Prominent Economist Questions Government Spending

93AS0809G Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English
22 Apr 93 p 8

[Article by K.P. Joseph: "Unchecked Government Spending; High Cost of Financial Mismanagement"]

[Text] Many major and unhealthy changes have occurred in recent years in the way Government spends public money. This year a colossal amount of Rs [Rupees] 38,000 crore will be spent as interest on public debt. This is more than the entire Central budget 10 years back. The interest bill has nearly doubled during the tenure of the present Finance Minister and is 10 times what it was about a decade ago. Each of us will be paying Rs 450 as our share of the interest this year. It is about 10 per cent of per capita income. Under the Constitution, Parliament has no authority to reduce the interest payments by even a rupee.

While constantly talking about all the good things about to happen to the economy, the Government seems to be rushing headlong into bankruptcy. India has recently joined the exclusive club of nations that spend more money on interest on debt than on defence, though India has one of the largest defence forces in the world. Only two years back, India spent Rs 1,000 crore less on interest than on defence; this year we will be spending nearly Rs 20,000 crore more on interest than on the

whole of the armed forces—Army, Navy and Air Force! Interest is now almost double of the defence budget. One out of every four rupees spent by the Central Government is to pay interest.

There is only one short paragraph of 87 words in the Finance Minister's long budget speech about what he calls "the tremendous burden of interest payments", which he says, reflects "the large fiscal deficit incurred year after year". This is certainly not the whole truth.

The outstanding public debt is estimated at Rs 4,36,160 crore at the end of the year. It is to be doubted if the Government is taking the public into full confidence about the debt problem. This is confirmed by the recommendations of the Task Force and Policy Group on External Debt Statistics about the existing policies regarding the confidentiality of defence debt and the absence of regular reports on the external debt position. The public has a right to be told by how much the rupee equivalent of the foreign debt and the interest payments has increased due to devaluation and the recent changes in the exchange rate. Tucked away in remote corners of the budget documents can be found information about the increase of Rs 500 crore in interest payments last year as being due to "higher cost of servicing external debt on account of exchange adjustment" etc.

This year's budget has another surprise for the taxpayer; for the first time ever, the total allowances paid to the government employees will exceed the total of their pay. The allowances have jumped from being less than half of salaries in 1989-90 to much more than the salaries this year. Annexure 7 in volume I of the Expenditure Budget gives the details. In Telecommunications salary is Rs 526 crore, allowances Rs 772 crore. Even the Department of Economic Affairs will pay double of the salary as allowances.

Spending has become reckless in some government departments, which should be models of prudent spending. The tour expenses of Ministers have shot up from Rs 5.5 crore in the 1992-93 budget to Rs 35 crore in the revised budget. Undisclosed amounts on VIP chartered flights and other luxuries will bloat the total bill, which will never be known. In 1989-90 the Lok Sabha budget was Rs 17 crore; this year it is double the amount. Besides this the Lok Sabha will be spending another Rs 13 crore on buildings.

No one has cared to determine and compare the cost of collection in the major revenue departments. The Audit Department which claims to be the watchdog of the public purse has liberally helped itself to the contents of the purse by increasing its budget from Rs 212 crore in 1989-90 to Rs 325 crore this year. It employs about 6,000 peons alone, which is more than the total strength of the American General Accounting Office, which audits expenditure of \$1,500 billion.

It should be clear from these examples that there is no control on spending by the Finance Ministry. The deficit reduction is made largely by arbitrary cuts in subsidies at

the expense of the helpless common man. From Rs 12,300 crore in the 1991-92 budget, it has come down to Rs 8,400 crore this year with fertilisers taking the biggest shock. What we have to remember is that the total of all subsidies at their peak was much less than the increase alone in the interest on debt after the present Government came to power.

The provisions in the Constitution about legislative control over public spending are breaking down all around us. The public does not get even half the value for its tax money. The Central and State Governments together should be losing much bigger amounts year after year through fraud, waste and sheer financial mismanagement than the amounts involved in the bank and shares scam. As the Government tries to march into the brave new world of its economic policies, an unseen army of government spendthrifts and fiddlers is destroying it from the rear.

Hike in Telephone Tariffs Would Take Effect in May

93AS0847C Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English
27 Apr 93 p 13

[Text] New Delhi—The government on Monday steeply revised the telephone tariffs in all segments ranging from ordinary public call, manual trunk call to registration fee and reduced the number of free calls to net an additional revenue of Rs 740 crore during the current year.

Announcing this in the Lok Sabha, the Minister of State for Communications, Mr Sukh Ram said the revised tariffs would take effect from May one, 1993.

He, however, left telegram charges untouched to provide relief to weaker sections. No increases were proposed for the telegram charges applicable to the press, the Minister said.

With a view to popularising the use of telephones in the rural sector, the government besides continuing with 50 per cent concession on trunk calls from the long distance public telephones, proposed further reduction in the charges for calls from a long distance public telephone to its parent exchange.

The telephone rentals for measured rate exchange systems of 30,000 lines and above are proposed to be revised by ten per cent. In pursuance of the policy of providing subsidised telephone services in rural areas, the telephone rentals for exchanges in rural areas have not been revised, Mr Sukh Ram said.

The government also announced a reduction in the number of free calls from 150 to 120 per bi-monthly period in all exchange systems of 1000 lines and above and revised the call unit charge increasing it by about 13 to 27 per cent in different slabs.

The charges for call made from attended type STD public telephones would be revised from Rs 1 to Rs 1.25

per unit, so that revision in call charges does not create serious anomalies in tariff structure.

The rates for manual trunk call charges for distances above 50 km have been increased by 11 to 30 per cent.

Consequent on the revision of tariffs for call units, a fifty per cent increase in the tariffs for international operator assisted calls have been proposed.

Mr Sukh Ram said in order to popularise the use of telephone in rural sector, it was proposed not only to continue the 50 per cent concession on trunk calls from the long distance public telephones but to further reduce the charges for call from a long distance public telephone to its parent exchange.

The charges proposed are 25 paisa per call to a flat rate exchange system and 50 paisa per call to a measured rate exchange system. These charges would be irrespective of the distance at which the parent exchange is located.

The government also steeply hiked the initial registration fee with effect from tomorrow for OYT [expansion not given] and non-OYT registrants in the measured exchange rate system.

For OYT applicants, for registration in exchanges with less than 1,000 lines the fee has been increased from Rs 5,000 to Rs 8,000, for 1,000 lines and above but below 10,000 lines from Rs 6,000 to Rs 10,000 and for 10,000 lines and above from Rs 8,000 to Rs 15,000.

For non-OYT applicants up to 9,999 lines the fee has been revised upwards from Rs 800 to Rs 2,000 and for 10,000 lines and above the charges will be Rs 3,000 against the existing Rs 1,000.

Mr Sukh Ram said it was not proposed to increase the charges for the telegrams even though the telegram charges were last revised on March 1, 1983.

He said this was done in keeping with the fact that the service mainly assisted the weaker sections. No increase was also proposed for the telegram charges applicable to the press.

No change was proposed in respect of flat rate exchanges which cater to rural areas.

He said the proposals would be effective from May one and would result in net additional revenue of Rs 740 crore for 1993-94.

Mr Sukh Ram said the amounts paid for registration were previously termed as "registration deposits" and earned interest which was now replaced by a waiting charge.

With the increase in registration fee, it was also proposed to allow applicants an additional waiting charge at the rate of 3 per cent over and above the normal rate of waiting charge payable on the registration fee if the

telephone connections were not provided within six months in the case of OYT and two years in the case of non-OYT registrants. PTI

External Aid: Delayed Use by Railways Criticized

*93AS9847E Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English
27 Apr 93 p 16*

[Text] New Delhi—Inept utilisation by the railways of external assistance from bilateral and multilateral sources has resulted in avoidable commitment charges running to staggering sums in hard currency, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) said on Monday.

In its forty-seventh report, tabled in the Lok Sabha by its chairman, Mr Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the PAC said a scrutiny of four projects being aided by the World Bank for the Indian Railways revealed major shortcomings in formulation and execution of projects.

It said that due to lack of proper project planning and their implementation, there were considerable delays in utilisation of external assistance.

Stating that the railways have generally failed to utilise these foreign loans during their original validity period, the committee said the railways have been seeking "repeated extensions" for utilising these loans, resulting in payment of huge additional commitment charges for the extended periods.

Though the committee did not deal with the railways proposal to import three-phase locomotives from the Swiss-Swedish consortium Asea Brown Boveri (ABB), its findings assume added significance in the light of prolonged delay in completing the loco deals as the railways were disbursing huge commitment charges to the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for non-utilisation of its loans for the purpose.

Expressing serious concern, the PAC said owing to the failure of the railways to utilise two loans from International Development Association (IDA), the railways had to pay huge avoidable extra commitment charges amounting to 30.59 lakh dollars for the extended periods.

It urged the Railway Ministry to examine thoroughly the matter and devise ways and means to ensure the utilisation of such loans within their validity period to avoid unnecessary outgo of foreign exchange as extra commitment charges.

The committee also found that delayed finalisation of tenders and delayed supplies by the firms had also resulted in substantial non-utilisation of loans to the tune of 13.277 million dollars.

It said the Railway Ministry should make all efforts to streamline suitably the process of tendering and placement of orders and timely arrangements of rupee resources so that the foreign loans are fully utilised within the set time frame.

The committee also voiced concern that the 18 locomotives procured at a cost of 97 million dollars and which were received in 1988, continue to suffer from a major harmonic content deficiency.

The PAC also wanted the Ministry to take concerted efforts to ensure that the persisting harmonic defects in the locomotives were satisfactorily removed within the available periods.

The committee was also unhappy to note that a commutator seasoning machine costing Rs. 35.21 lakh received in diesel loco components workshop (DCW), Patiala, in June 1986 was not commissioned so far. This delayed action on the part of the railways had clearly rendered the expenditure of Rs. 35.21 lakh incurred on this machine infructuous so far.

Dunkel Proposals' Possible Impact Viewed

*93AS0865I New Delhi ORGANISER in English
9 May 93 pp 34-37*

[Article by Jagdish Shettigar: "The Dunkel Proposals: Their Impact On India"]

[Text] The Uruguay Round of Multi-lateral Trade Negotiations was launched at Punta del Este in Uruguay in September 1986. The draft proposals put up by Mr Arthur Dunkel, the Director General of General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), for discussion among the 108 member countries meant to expand the scope of GATT. As against discussion on tariff and non-tariff measures regulating trade in goods in the previous round of negotiations, Agenda in the Uruguay Round included trade in services, Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIMS). Though negotiations were scheduled to be concluded by December 1990, this did not happen because of differences among the member countries on various proposals.

Background

Before making an indepth analysis of various proposals made by Mr Arthur Dunkel, it is worth recollecting certain related developments. For instance, industrialised countries have been pressurising India to liberalise its policies specially with regard to Intellectual Property Rights and Trade Related Investment measures as a precondition to improve bilateral economic relations. The matter used to be raised continuously for the past decade or so in Joint Business Councils (JBCs)—specially the ones with industrialised countries such as U.S.A. Somewhat similar tone started reflecting in the so-called guidelines from international financial institutions such as IMF and World Bank. Having failed to get the desired results, U.S.A. resorted to pressure tactics by naming India under Super 301 Act and Special-301 Act of U.S. Omnibus Trade Laws. While the Super-301 Act aimed at getting our policies regarding TRIMS liberalised, the Special-301 Act demanded amendment on the

Indian Patent Act, 1970, in line with the Paris Convention. It is a different matter that U.S.A. did not go ahead to take action against India under its Trade Laws—probably under compulsions of international politics. Meanwhile, the Dunkel Proposals came into circulation as if to argue the case on behalf of the industrialised countries—though one or two provisions were incorporated against their interests. But the overall impact would be detrimental to interests of the developing countries.

Let us examine the major proposals made by Mr Dunkel and their impact on Indian economy.

Market Access

Negotiations have been taking place for across the board reductions of tariffs. In fact some countries have been stressing for maximum reduction in product groups of interest to them, e.g., tropical products, natural resource based products, agricultural products, textiles, etc., Mr Dunkel has not made any concrete suggestion in this context. Instead the matter has been left to be resolved through bilateral and multilateral negotiations. India has offered a reduction by 30 per cent of its basic customs duty on raw-materials, intermediates and capital goods with a few exceptions. Now that the Congress-I Government has implemented this part of the proposal through the Central Budget for 1993-94, the matter remains only of academic interest.

It may be mentioned here that customs duty is not merely a revenue raising avenue. In fact, this is a negligible part of its objectives. Customs duty structure has to be viewed from the angle of larger interests such as domestic economic status with particular reference to supply of local manpower and raw-materials. Naturally, it has to be examined [on a] case by case basis. But the very concept of across the board reductions amounts to negation of its broad objectives.

Agricultural Trade

The Uruguay Round Negotiations also focussed on policies relating to agricultural trade and production. It may be mentioned here that industrialised countries have been heavily subsidising their agricultural trade. One of the major proposals by Mr Dunkel in this context is that all domestic support in favour of agricultural produces with the exception of certain measures which have been exempted (in view of their non-distortive effect) shall be reduced by 20 per cent between 1993 and 1999. Secondly, export subsidies which are in the nature of direct subsidies shall be subject to commitments for reduction of budgetary outlay by 36 per cent by 1999. Thirdly, there shall be comprehensive tariffication. Ordinary customs duty including, those resulting from tariffication, shall be reduced during 1993-1999 on a simple average basis of 36 per cent with a minimum rate of reduction of 15 per cent for each tariff line.

However, the developing countries have been given special treatment in this regard. For instance, countries

which have aggregate support levels of up to 10 per cent for individual agricultural products shall not be required to make reductions. Since India's subsidy support is far lower than the ceiling, proposal with regard to reduction of export subsidy is not applicable in our case. Secondly, investment subsidies which are generally available to agriculture and agricultural input subsidies provided to low income or resource poor farmers have been exempted from the purview of reduction commitments. In principle, the proposal is more than fair as it aims at protecting interests of the poor farmers. But the problem is from the point of implementation. In view of the illiteracy of farmers in developing countries like India and their succumbing to grip of large landlords, can one hope to implement this policy effectively? Failure of our State Governments to implement dual pricing for fertilizers may be kept in mind in this context. Benefits meant for poor farmers may be cornered away by the rich farmers in the event of discriminatory treatment between the two. Wisdom lies in being practical.

Thirdly, the developing countries which have balance of payments crisis have been exempted from the purview of tariffication of non-tariff measures. Since India is expected to continue to be under the grip of balance of payments crisis at least a few more years, we may escape from the obligation of allowing import of agricultural products. But the basic issue is: should a country be pressurised to import certain minimum amount of its requirements even if they are sufficiently available within the country? This could be left to be decided through bilateral trade agreement—depending on demand and supply possibilities among the trading partners instead of integrating the same into the GATT system.

Textiles and Clothing

The Dunkel Proposals aim at integrating trade in textiles and clothing by phasing out Multi-Fibre Arrangement (MFA). By January 3, 2003, all quota restrictions under the MFA are expected to be removed. Of the total imports under the MFA, 51 per cent are expected to be integrated into the GATT system in 2000 while the remaining 49 per cent would be integrated by 2003. Many experts are of the opinion that process of integration is slow. Anyway, considering the existing quota restriction, its removal may help India to enhance textile exports. In fact, this is the only area under the Dunkel Proposals which appear to be in favour of India.

GATT Rules

In this area it was widely felt the need to strengthen and preserve the multilateral trading system by reaffirming the principle of non-discrimination and by removing ambiguities and scope for arbitrary action in the administration of rules governing non-tariff measures. One of the major proposals made by Mr Dunkel in this context was anti-dumping measure. But countries with a per capita income of less than U.S.\$1000 per annum have been exempted from obligation to phase out export

subsidy in general industrial products. Since India does not come anywhere near this level of per capital income it may take years to fall within this purview. However, there is a provision that even the case of such countries, where a product exceeds a share of 3.25 per cent of world trade of that particular product for two consecutive years, export subsidy has to be phased one.[as published] Right now only one item, namely, diamond and jewellery falls within this purview in India's case—having around 10 per cent of world trade in the area. In fact, this is an area through which India earns considerable position of its export earnings. Besides, this is a labour intensive activity. Phasing out subsidy to export of gems and jewellery may adversely affect export of this item and consequently, interests of artisans depending on this industry for their livelihood.

In the area of rules, provision regarding balance of payments has come to the secure of the developing countries. For instance, rules will make it possible for developing countries like India to facilitate import of capital goods and inputs needed for industrial and agricultural production while maintaining restrictions on consumer goods.

Intellectual Property Rights

Compared to all other provisions, its suggestions regarding Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) is vicious in motive and would have adverse impact on economies of developing countries like India. It appears, all other provisions are just an "eye wash" to get provisions on TRIPS incorporated into the GATT systems.

It may be recalled, here, that Indian Patent Act, 1970, which was evolved after thorough examination of all related aspects for twenty years, is a balancing factor between recognition of an inventor and interests of the society. But this important feature is missing in the Dunkel Proposals, according to which areas such as food, chemicals and pharmaceuticals are to [be] brought within the purview of product patents. Besides patent protection is to be uniformly extended to 20 years. Under the Indian Patent Act, general patent protection is provided for 14 years while in the case of food, chemicals and pharmaceuticals it is available only for seven years.

Immediate adverse effect of the Dunkel Proposals will be on drug prices in India. It may be pointed out here that before the Indian Patent Act, drug prices in India were higher than those in the world. But our Patent Act encouraged growth of chemicals and pharmaceuticals industry, as a result of which supply position has improved. Today, drug prices in India are the lowest in the world. Of course, even at this level of drug prices, a substantial section of our population feels the prices are beyond their reach. The advanced countries have been demanding change in our Patent Act to facilitate transfer of technology. No doubt, in many areas Indian technological base is weak and there should not be any reservation for transfer of technology in such areas. If that is

the real intention, why reservation about provision regarding compulsory licensing? Under the Indian Patent Act, if the patent holder fails to commercialise his invention within three years, automatically he will lose his rights. Recognition for one's invention is one thing. But the society has equal right in one's invention. The Dunkel Proposal not only diluted compulsory licensing provision by keeping it out of the GATT system. It went one step ahead boldly by equating imports with production. The intention is clear. The patent holder may not only undertake commercial production, but also make the host country to depend for its requirements on imports from parent units of multinational companies. Apart from adversely affecting our balance of payments protection and consequent rise in external debt burden, it would stifle domestic economic growth—depriving employment opportunities to our people. This is a clear strategy to protect interests of the advanced economies at the cost of developing nations.

Besides, the draft proposes to bring agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry into patent system unlike the Indian Act. Extension of intellectual property rights to plant varieties will lead to greater domination of agriculture by multinational corporations, slower diffusion of new varieties on account of restrictions on adaptive research weakening of public sector research and development and generic research. The proposed changes would prevent the small scale companies and farmers from multiplying the seeds and selling them to others. The sale of seeds conducted within farming community played an important role in the spread of green revolution in the sixties and seventies.

Thus, Mr Dunkel's Proposals with regard to TRIPS is a clear trap to make developing countries like India to lose their economic sovereignty.

Institutional

Vicious motive of the Dunkel Proposals could be seen clearly through its provision for institutional changes. There is a proposal to change the characteristics of GATT and make it Multilateral Trade Organisation (MTO) by including TRIPS and TRIMs. Though there is a separate U.N. body to deal with intellectual property rights—World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO)—suggestion has been made now for GATT playing that role.

Worst of all is the call for a rejection or acceptance of the package as a whole. This is something which can not be acceptable to civilized society. Each and every item has to be viewed separately and amended if needed.

Conclusion

Thus, in the overall interests of the country, the government should not sign the agreement without taking people into confidence. India should seriously debate the matter at senior level with regard to its implications to

developing countries and to evolve consensus. At any rate, sovereignty of the country should not be bartered away.

Industrialists Said Fearing Foreign Competition

93AS0864C *Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English*
12 May 93 p 15

[Text] New Delhi, May 11—Industrialists and apex chambers are flooding the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) with petitions for a level playing ground to face competition from foreign companies.

They argue that without a cheaper export credit and rationalised import tariff structure, the Indian industry will lose its edge in the market.

Though petitioning to the PMO is normally a matter of routine after the Budget presentation, the tone this time is desperate.

Industry is now focussing its disadvantages in areas of domestic and export manufacturers vis-a-vis the advantages their foreign competitors enjoy.

However, bureaucrats of the policy making level are unresponsive to some of the complaints like high interest rates.

"It only shows that industry is not competitive. There will be problems of adjustment, which they are well aware of," asserted an official.

But, the government is clearly worried. The Cabinet secretary, Mr S. Rajagopal, has constituted a task force under the director general of foreign trade, Mr C.K. Modi, to sift through these petitions.

A high-power committee, headed either by the Cabinet secretary or by the industries secretary, will also be constituted to scrutinise specific problems industry could face in the new economic environment.

Senior functionaries of the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), who recently met the principal secretary, Mr A.N. Varma, and the Cabinet secretary, Mr S. Rajagopal, had argued for a level playing ground in the export arena.

"Interest rates on export credit rule high at 13 per cent," while competitors like Thailand, South Korea and Pakistan enjoy "soft interest rates of 11, seven and 10 per cent respectively," the federation said.

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) also repeats the plea, pointing out that the high credit cost is pushing up domestic production costs.

It adds that there are several anomalies in the import tariff structure applicable to capital goods. Besides, the three-tier structure has not been adhered to in the last Budget.

On capital goods and project imports, they cite more than 500 cases where there is no equivalent countervailing duty on imports, though there is excise duty on domestic manufacturers.

Though the finance minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, had assured that this would be looked into, industry is not too hopeful, and warns that the government "will destroy the domestic industry," if it persists with the present tariff structure.

These organisations, however, hasten to emphasise that they are not against liberalisation. But, they say, competition must be on a legal plane.

Commentary Notes Success in Containing Inflation

BK1806125193 *Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1010 GMT 18 Jun 93*

[Commentary by Journalist Darshan Singh]

[Text] The year 1992 ended a reassuring note on the economic front. The inflation rate which was hovering in double digits for nearly two years has been brought for the first time between six to seven percent, that too in the year of structural adjustment and fiscal stabilization. The inflation rate which peaked at 16.7 percent in August 1991 has been successfully brought down to 6.5 percent in May 1993. Price rise this year has been the lowest since 1989-90 in terms of Wholesale Price Index, WPI, and since 1990-91 in terms of Consumer Price Index, CPI.

Effective intervention by the government, strict control of fiscal deficit, tight monetary policy, judicious management of balance of payments, liberalization of import compression, measures to boost industrial production, and adequate supply of essential commodities through the public distribution system contributed in controlling the inflation rate in the country. And more significantly, the reversal of the inflationary psychosis in the economy has helped in off-loading of stocks in the market by traders and big farmers. It improved the general availability leading to a decline in prices of even such commodities whose production has not increased and where the stocks held by the government were not substantial.

Of the 447 commodities, price for which was monitored there was no increase in the prices of 75 commodities over the last one year. Another 63 items registered a decline in prices—the decline being 10 percent or more in 33 commodities. The overall price rise during the current year upto the end of May 93 has been only 6.2 percent as against 10.8 percent last year.

The recapitulation of the broad characteristics of the behaviour of prices in Indian economy brings out clearly that not only have the seasonal trends been different this year but several factors are still present which should have otherwise put strong pressure on the price line. One

instance is the increase in the price index for category fuel, power, light, and lubricants. The annual rate of inflation of this group of products was 13.7 percent till about the middle of February this year. This rate was maintained steadily till the middle of April and even by the middle of May there were no further price increases.

The price trend, it may be assumed, reflects the increase in the prices of petroleum and its products in the calendar year before the budget was presented. What is inexplicable is that though the immediate impact of this price rise is evident of the manufactured products category, the other categories do not reflect any such increase. The price of manufactured articles increased by more than 3 percent point, the annual rate jumped 6.6 percent in February to beyond 10 percent in recent weeks.

But that is about all. There appears to have been no impact of the rise in fuel prices on other cultural commodities both foodgrains and industrial raw materials, even though agriculture today is both fuel and power intensive.

It can be surmised that the counter seasonal behaviour of prices this year has been largely caused by the good Rabi [spring crop] harvest especially of wheat, cotton, and oil seeds and the fact that the government had let it be known that another round of foodgrains imports would be resorted to if prices did not fall. Another factor was the sharp reduction in bank credit to the government during the last financial year 1992-93. The net increase in bank credit to the government fell to 10.3 percent during 1992-93 from 19 to 7 percent the year before. Since monetary measures have their impact with a timelag, the effect is clearly more pronounced after the close of the 1992-93 financial year.

Former Army Chief Urges Limiting Internal Deployment

*93AS0809E Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English
21 Apr 93 p 8*

[Article by Lt.-Gen. S.K. Sinha (Retd.): "Internal Security; Need for Strict Limits to Army Deployment"]

[Text] The Army is the nation's ultimate weapon. When diplomats fail to preserve peace, it is called upon to go to war and restore peace. Equally, when the civil administration fails to maintain order, the Army is called upon to restore it. Defence against external aggression is the primary task of the Army and internal security is its secondary role. The soldier is trained to use maximum force so that he can unquestionably defeat the enemy and inflict maximum loss on him. While dealing with internal disorder, the soldier has to learn to use minimum force and inflict least casualties.

It is a paradox that today the Army has to be used far more on internal security tasks than during two centuries of British rule. There are of course various reasons for this. In the present disturbed times, violence has become endemic in our society. Thanks to corrupt and unscrupulous politicians, the administration has become increasingly ineffective and has lost its moral authority. The growing nexus between the politicians, the criminals and the police has dangerously subverted the ability of the Government to maintain order. Criminalisation and politicisation of the police has been playing havoc with the morale and discipline of the force. The police is now widely accused of bias during communal riots and is often seen to be functioning as the agents of the political party in power.

The undesirable fall-out from prolonged and frequent use of the Army for internal security needs to be fully realised. One of the ill-effects is that it exposes the Army to all the prevailing ills of our society. This imposes a severe strain on its discipline. Also, the frequent failure of the civil administration to carry out its duties and its reliance on the Army to pull the chestnuts out of the fire, sends wrong signals to both the citizen and the soldier.

During counter-insurgency operations against secessionist forces, who stage an armed rebellion or resort to terrorism, the Army has to use greater force and take sterner measures than in normal aid to civil authority operations. At times, the soldier gets provoked due to ambushes and killing of his colleagues and commits excesses. The My Lai episode in Vietnam is a case in point. By and large the Indian Army has a commendable record and has not been involved in any instance of that magnitude. Prevention of such instances is a greater challenge to junior leadership in the Army. This can be done only through strict enforcement of discipline. If such instances do take place, immediate deterrent action must be taken against the guilty and due publicity given to it. No attempt should be made to sweep things under the carpet in a mistaken notion of maintaining morale. It must also be appreciated that it is the stock in trade of

secessionist forces to make wild allegations against the Army for gathering sympathy and support.

A few months ago, the high-profile Punjab Police Chief, Mr. K.P.S. Gill, made a bid for army units deployed for internal security in Punjab, to be placed under his command. Without in any manner ignoring the commendable success achieved by him in combating terrorism, the dangers inherent in such a proposal must be highlighted. The Army is called out for such duty only when the police has failed to maintain order. The nation's ultimate weapon cannot be frittered away to reinforce failure. The field of expertise of the police officer is control and investigation of crime and not command of large bodies of armed personnel. The law of the land enjoins that unlike the police, the Army is never placed under the command of a magistrate. Section 130 of the Code of Criminal Procedure is very explicit on this point. Thus, this proposal lacked legal sanctity.

There have also been two occasions in which Ministers have issued statements to the press pertaining to the Army which are disturbing. Chief Minister Hiteshwar Saikia accused the Army of being late by 12 hours as a result of which 50 lives were lost in post-Ayodhya communal violence in Hojira sub-division of Assam. One does not know the full facts of the case. If the allegation is correct, then suitable action must be taken against those guilty. It does not behove the Chief Minister to issue such a statement to the press without mentioning the full version of what happened and the action taken, as that only tarnishes the image of the Army.

The second instance pertains to no less a person than Defence Minister Sharad Pawar himself. In August 1992 the Corps Commander in Punjab issued a statement to the press that the Army would soon be withdrawn from internal security duties in the State. At a press conference on August 21, Mr. Sharad Pawar stated that the Corps Commander had not obtained his approval and had "crossed the limits". If the Corps Commander had really exceeded his brief, the whole matter could have been dealt with more discreetly. To add insult to injury, the Defence Minister added that he was a mere "Fauji" (soldier). Such derogatory reference to the military or its leadership in public by the Defence Minister cannot but have an unfortunate effect on the moral and discipline of the Army.

The recent catastrophic communal riots in Bombay also raised some disturbing issues connected with the deployment of the Army for internal security. The Defence Minister was camping in Bombay and almost functioning as a parallel Chief Minister. Yet there was undue delay in sending for the Army and when the Army was called out, its role was initially limited to carrying out flag marches. Such marches are carried out as a show of strength to deter trouble but once widespread trouble has already erupted, the requirement is more to effectively patrol the disturbed areas and have columns at instant readiness to deal with disturbances. It was also reported

that the non-availability of magistrates was hampering the Army's operations. This drew a certain amount of flak from the people against the Army as they had been demanding immediate deployment of the Army.

It is desirable that magistrates accompany army columns so that when required they can hand over the situation to the Army to disperse any unlawful assembly. However, the non-availability of a magistrate cannot be an excuse for the Army not being able to act. The law provides for a commissioned officer to act on his own initiative to disperse an unlawful assembly when he finds that public security is manifestly endangered. He should thereafter contact a magistrate as soon as possible and be guided by his advice regarding continuing action.

Standing Committee Endorses Defense Expenditure

93AS0847B Madras *INDIAN EXPRESS* in English
27 Apr 93 p 13

[Text] New Delhi—The standing committee on defence of Parliament has endorsed the defence expenditure of Rs 19,180 crore (net) sought in this year's budget.

Noting that the defence expenditure of India as a percentage of GDP [Gross Domestic Product] has been around three per cent, the committee says that this is reasonable considering the fact that the figures in some of the neighbouring countries is substantially higher.

The report of the committee headed by Mr Buta Singh was presented to Parliament on Monday.

This is the first time that Parliament has taken a much closer look at various aspects of the defence budget under the standing committee system introduced this year.

While approving the total budget as also the inter-services allocation, the committee emphasised the need for the government constantly striving to ensure economy in defence expenditure. The committee noted with satisfaction that the economy measures already introduced had resulted in a saving of Rs 1,000 crore per annum in the case of Army, Rs 49.93 crore in Navy and Rs 67.90 crore in Air Force. The efforts should continue so that more saving in a variety of ways could be made.

Discussing the demands pertaining to indigenisation, the committee was happy to note that since disintegration of the erstwhile Soviet Union and consequent disruption of the product support, earnest efforts have been initiated by all the agencies concerned to achieve self-reliance.

Noting that a number of committees have been set up for identification and indigenisation of spares and equipment, the committee suggested that similar committees be set up to give fillip to indigenisation in other areas.

The committee scrutinised the inter-services allocation comparing it with that of the last year and came to the conclusion that the percentage increase over the revised

estimates of 1992-93 in respect of Army, Navy and Air Force is reasonable. The analysis made by the committee shows that the increase is 7.03 per cent in the case of Army, 13.19 per cent for Navy and 19.23 for Air Force.

Similarly, the committee approved the allocation for defence research and development which will be five per cent of the total budget compared to 4.1 per cent last year. The allocations are considered to be consistent keeping in view the priorities of the three services and the available overall allocations.

After studying the condition of the cantonments, the committee recommended that an expert group be constituted to make an indepth study to find out the resources available with the boards, the additional costs required for the services needs on a long-term perspective plan and to decide whether the government of India should take the responsibility of providing resources. The committee also wanted local MPs [Member of Parliament] and MLAs [Member of Legislative Assembly] to be represented on the cantonment boards.
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Navy Struggling to Obtain Its Share of Defense Funds

93AS0837D Calcutta *THE STATESMAN* in English
30 Apr 93 p 8

[Article by Amar Zutshi: "Funds for Navy: Avoiding Inter-Service Rivalry"]

[Text] The Navy's long and loud lobbying for expansion, howsoever questionable, has nevertheless yielded dividends. It has already secured a massive increase of 50 per cent of its share of the annual Defence budget—from 8.9 per cent to 13.5 per cent over the last decade or so. Since such a hefty hike has reduced the allocations for the Army and the Air Force proportionately, resentment has been mounting over the Government's abject surrender to sailor salesmanship despite the fact that the Navy's relevance in combating threats to national security has been limited if not only marginal.

By tradition or healthy convention, the Services are usually not given to the public display of inter-Services differences. Yet, the recent announcement of the Naval Chief, Admiral Ram Dass, that the Navy would further seek to enhance its share of the Defence budget from 13.5 per cent to 20 per cent at least during the next 10 years, unmindful of the hard times already faced by the other two Services due to the resources shortage, has virtually stirred the proverbial hornet's nest. Dismissing the Naval case as baloney based on improbable "ifs" and "buts," it is argued that neither the past experience nor future appraisals of threats to our security support any such claim.

Poor Budgeting

Despite stray attempts over the last 50 years, successive Governments have failed to set up a credible and

dependable machinery like the NSC [National Service Corps] to monitor and assess the national security environment so as to evolve a coherent strategic policy. In the absence of a long-term appraisal of threat perceptions and national aims and objectives that determine corresponding strategies to meet such contingencies, Defense budget-making is determined largely by transient factors and the dexterity of the three Services in presenting their demands.

Of late, power brokers and some top industrial houses stepping into Naval shipping interests have started to exert their clout in Defence policy-making. But never before had any other Service in India used the Press or Parliament to extract its pound of flesh. How the Army and the Air Force responds to the Navy's onslaught to project itself as the sole arbiter of the country's "international legitimacy, external identity and relevance" remains to be seen.

From Aden to Adelaide the Indian Ocean Region is dotted with littoral States militarily weaker than, and practically all of them friendly to, India. With the end of superpower rivalry, the global geo-strategic environment has changed enormously. The U.S.A. has already withdrawn its Navy and Air Force from bases in the Philippines; while its logistic facilities in Diego Garcia may continue as before, Russian or even U.S. warships have rarely been sighted patrolling the IOR [expansion not given] lately. Except in West Asia, superpower intervention is unlikely to occur.

Each joint Naval exercise involves an extra expenditure to the exchequer of Rs [Rupees] 5 crores to Rs 15 crores, depending on the nature and extent of the manoeuvres involved. If the Indian economy can afford it, well and good. But it serves no great purpose to involve the Navy in a spate of such exercises unless the Navy intends to exploit the opportunity as yet another alibi for expansion. But the Government must examine how so many exercises fit in with India's Defence need, problems and priorities.

While there is a convergence of mutual interests, Indo-U.S. Naval cooperation (more precisely Indo-U.S. Pacific Command Cooperation) is primarily aimed at maintaining a U.S. naval presence for policing regional sea-lanes by proxy. The two sides hardly have common interests for Air Force or Army cooperation except in specific areas like the U.S. interest in Indian expertise in high-altitude (Siachen) warfare. Perhaps Army and Air Force cooperation with Pakistan figures on the agenda of the U.S. Central Command.

South Asia is nowhere on the agenda even of the Clinton administration. What is revealing and important for Indian political leaders to note is that the ongoing military cooperation between the two countries is purely a product of military-level initiatives. But military cooperation sans a political level understanding could prove slippery. It is, therefore, time the two sides realize the urgent and imperative need for a political dialogue at the

chief executive level so as to arrive at well-defined and clear cut policy objectives if the on-going arrangements have to continue.

Briefly speaking, the only credible maritime threat to Indian security could arise from Pakistan or China. Indian geostrategically realities being what they are, in the past four wars with Pakistan and one with China, the Indian Navy's role was virtually non-existent. The only exception was the lone but bold offensive strike on two Pakistani destroyers at Karachi on the night of December 9, 1971, by Navy missile boats, the IAF [Indian Air Force] having already destroyed its oil installations hours before. The rest of it was routine wartime patrolling in the Arabian Sea in which the Pakistani submarines sank the Corvette, INS Kukri.

Story Telling

In the Bay of Bengal all that was left of the East Pakistani Navy was just about three to four ill-armed small patrol craft. As Vice-Admiral Krishnan said, since "the Vikrant aircraft-carrier could never survive any operations in the Arabian Sea with Pakistani submarines" on the prowl, it had to be moved to the safety of the Bay of Bengal along with its six escort ships after the IAF had destroyed the East Pakistani Air Force on the ground itself. The myth of its blockade of the Bay of Bengal can, therefore, be included only in children's story books. Even in the 1965 war the Vikrant had to be trussed up in dry docks protected by Army ack guns.

But legitimacy or no legitimacy, we cannot discard the carriers because we need a blue-water Navy and more carriers to fight perhaps in the Mauritius, Seychelles, Dakshin Gangotri and innumerable other imaginary sea ghosts that threaten our EEZ [Exclusive Economic Zone] shipping lanes.

With the withdrawal of nine American vessels shortly, the Pakistani Navy will be left with just four principal surface ships compared to 28 of India. While China is modernizing its military and is gaining access to Myanmar ports, its territorial disputes over the Spratlys with ASEAN [Association of South East Asian Nations], Vietnam and even Japan could tie down its Navy in the South China Sea.

Another argument cited for naval expansion is the need to protect the long coastline, the vast EEZ, the island territories, off-shore oil installations and merchant shipping. The size of a Navy is not determined by the size of the coastline EEZ or island territory. Just because the skies above India are larger than our coastline, it cannot be an excuse to relate to the size of the IAF to the Indian skies. Size (force level) of the Air Force or Navy is not determined by the size of the skies or seas but by credible threat perceptions, among other things.

Moreover, global law and order has yet not worsened to such an extent that Navies are forced to adopt combat roles for protection of the EEZ or merchant shipping during peace time. Yet, despite Naval escorts, 44 per

cent of merchant shipping was hit during the Gulf hostilities. A Naval blockade takes time to register its bite. India or Pakistan cannot hope to alter the outcome of short-duration wars by resorting to such blockades even if one could be enforced.

Besides our existing Naval facilities, we have an Air Force base in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands which may be strengthened to protect our island territories. Our offshore oil rigs are well protected by the joint efforts of the IAF and Navy—DAG—with round-the-clock monitoring of airspace by Air Force radars linked with IGLA missiles. The nation cannot afford to squander scarce resources to meet improbable worst-case scenarios called up by the Navy at the drop of a hat to pressurize lay decision-makers to expand the Navy.

Hook or Crook

Last year, Vice-Admiral Lakhkar revealed to the Press that the Government had sanctioned the purchase of a multi-purpose surveillance aircraft—AWAC [Airborne Warning and Control]—for the Coast Guard. Earlier, the Government had not accepted the Navy's demand for an AWAC since the IAF, which needs one most, has not been able to get even an advanced jet trainer during the last two decades, leave alone an AWAC. Not to be outdone, the Navy routed the same demand through the Coast Guard for an AWAC under the guise of a "surveillance aircraft," and got it. It should make the IAF sit up a bit and take stock of developments around.

Bearing in mind the experience of the last 50 years, conditioned by the subcontinent's geo-strategical realities as well as the very low naval offensive potential of our likely adversaries, the present strength of the Indian Navy makes it the world's fifth largest. The need of the hour is not empire-building but rationalization and consolidation if not reduction. Get rid of the carriers, the glamorous white elephants, to save hundreds of crores of wasteful expenditures and get SS Class submarines, preferably nuclear ones.

The sinking of the Petya class INS Andamans with 14 officers and seamen, considered inglorious in peace time, as also the OSA class missile boat INS Chapal, besides SDBT-57 and SDBT-58, is a sad commentary on the sorry shape of naval combat vessels. The Navy has no reason to bite off more than it can swallow. Our Defence forces must strive for cost-effective defence.

Finally, since the Army and the Air Force will continue to be the sheet-anchor and mainstay of India's Defence as ever before, it must be ensured that their fighting edge and potential is not undermined by unethical inter-Service rivalry. It would be a much more serious blow to Indian security if Delhi is bombed or Amritsar or Kashmir is captured than if an Andaman isle were to fall to the enemy despite our heavy naval presence there.

Defense Expenditure Increases Seen Unjustified

*93AS0864E Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English
6 May 93 p 9*

[Article by V.M. Sathish: "So Much on Guns Leaves Little for Butter"]

[Text] India's defence budget allocation for the fiscal year 1993-94 has increased by nine per cent, an increase of Rs [Rupees] 17.5 billion. The current figure of Rs 189 billion, according to a post-budget interview to foreign correspondents by the finance minister, Mr Manmohan Singh, is around 2.4 per cent of gross domestic product.

Experts feel total defence outlay is substantially higher than official figures show. The figures cleverly exclude items like expenditure on pensions—around Rs 12 billion—expenditure on strategic roads, as well as nuclear, missile and space programmes, and even paramilitary forces deployed on the border. These amount to a lot of money.

Budget estimates for paramilitary forces during 1992-94 totalled Rs 20.24 billion. The coast guard comes under the customs budget and allocations for the year and a half old Rashtriya Rifles is concealed in the civilian portion of the budget. The department of atomic energy received Rs 10.7 billion. The space allocation is Rs 5.1 billion.

Aspects of the defence budget will seem mysterious to those initiated in the art of fiscal jugglery. For example, unlike other ministries, the domestic earning of the defence establishment, like income from military farms and canteen stores, is treated as credit on the revenue side. At times this nullifies actual expenditure. Further, the inventory costs on the capital side take years to be reflected in the budget, particularly outlay on outright purchases and allied commitments.

This camouflages the impact of defence on the budget. Thus the capital budget is shown as a mere one-tenth of total defence outlay. On paper it only appreciated by Rs 1 billion at a time when revenue expenditure has increased eightfold. And this during the Eighties, a time of massive arms transfers from the Soviet Union.

The public needs to know about the close interaction between defence spending, militarisation and the overall development of Indian capitalism.

India's defence budget does not reflect global or regional strategic conditions. Even when Pakistan was subjected to a formal aid embargo by the West, Indian defence expenditure continued to increase. This indicates interests other than security guide military budgets in India—possibly something akin to the military industrial complexes of the West.

The private sector has many reasons to keep an eye on the defence industries. Thanks to security considerations domestic military production does not face the kind of competition corporate manufacturers usually do. Also,

as it is difficult for defence forces to adapt to new products military equipment makers are assured of long product runs.

The private sector does benefit from military spending in the form of subcontracts. Large corporations often supply primary contractors. Steel mills, for example, produce the armour plates used in tanks or warships. But private industry would like a larger role.

The defence industry generally has a single buyer, namely the government. It is assured large offtakes if it can sell to overseas military establishments. This places defence industry in a uniquely strong position and even its low per capita productivity is not an obstacle.

From 1964 onwards the Indian private corporate sector has been lobbying covertly and overtly to remove the veil of secrecy surrounding defence production.

The various industrial lobbies like the chambers of commerce and the Confederation of Indian Industry [CII] have tried hard for a slice of the defence pie.

The ever-mounting defence budget is seen as a safety net for the private sector, especially when it suffers the type of recessions presently facing the nation. An increasingly militarised economy could help corporations tide over periods of slack demand. That this militarisation is taking place is evident if the structure of government expenditure is analysed.

Since 1950-51 total government expenditure has increased more than 193 times. In the same period development expenditure claimed 42 per cent of total expenditure. The share of development expenditure rose to 60 per cent by 1960-61. Thereafter, development expenditure tended to account for around two-thirds of total expenditure.

The increase of non-development expenditure reveals a different picture. This has far outstripped increase in GNP [Gross National Product]. It now constitutes more than double the percentage of GNP than it did in 1950-51—13.3 per cent compared with 5.6 per cent. The largest item under the non-development head is defence which claimed Rs 16.35 billion or 13.4 per cent of the total in 1991-92. About one-third of all non-plan expenditure and one-fifth of total Centre expenditure relates to defence.

Military apologists argue that at 3.5 to 4 per cent of GNP India's defence expenditure is modest by world standards. Such statistics are scarcely relevant for a country not exactly flush with funds and half of whose population lives below the poverty line.

If the defence budget could by some miracle revert to the 1979-80 levels India could with one year's saving provide drinking water and electricity to all the villages, energise 2.5 million pump sets or build 300,000 km of rural link roads or build 1.2 million two-room houses. Forgoing one squadron of Mirage 2000s alone could pay for 300,000 primary school buildings.

Due to technological advances, particularly the increasing use of computer software, the cost of weapons increases almost geometrically with each new generation. Worse, weapons do not necessarily buy more security.

The defence sectors absorption of scientists and managers from civilian life is a little known internal brain drain. The demise of the socialist bloc can be attributed to the enormous cost its military spending, at the cost of producing consumer goods, placed on its economy. Similarly, the decline of the United States economy is being attributed to years of excessive military expenditures. India should draw lessons from such experiences.

SOCIAL ISSUES

Further Investigation of Film Industry Urged
93AS0809D Madras INDIAN EXPRESS in English
21 Apr 93 p 8

[Text] Many blockbusters produced in Bollywood have, as their main theme, the diabolic operations of fiends of Bombay's underworld. The average film-goer is supposed to be thrilled by their intrigues and brutalities even if he assumes that these all belong to the realm of fantasy. It now looks as if this assumption is questionable. Reel life, after all, may not be as far removed from real life as has been thought. The arrest of the matinee idol, Sanjay Dutt on the charge of illegal possession of one AK-56 rifle promises revelations about the nexus between the film industry and international gangsters beyond the wildest imagination about their true reach. The case is extraordinary inasmuch as its possible links with the Bombay blasts are being investigated. It is the possibility of subversive politics, too, and not just economic crimes, being guided from the safety of the glitter world that has invested the case with special importance.

Bombay police have so far given a few bare facts relating to Dutt's illegal possession of a rifle. But they call for even more thorough investigations than have led to the seizures in Bombay and along the coast of adjoining Thane and Raigad districts of vast quantities of the deadly RDX explosives, arms and ammunition and the capture of over 50 people involved in storing this lethal cargo. Sanjay Dutt's name cropped up during interrogation of Hanif Kadawala, one of the proprietors of Magnum Video, who has been linked with the Memons implicated in the Bombay blasts. Police have said that Kadawala had procured nine AK-56 rifles and sold them to various persons including Sanjay Dutt. To find out who those persons are is the immediate task before the police.

The central purpose of the investigations into the illegal sale of rifles by Hanif Kadawala will naturally be to

ascertain the precise relationship between him and his business partner, Samir Hingora (also in police custody) and the Memon brothers. Did it, for instance, go beyond financial racketeering? Kadawala and Hingora are known to have had close business links with Dawood Ibrahim, the overseas king of the Bombay underworld, who is reputed to account for the bulk of the finance available to the film industry. Inevitably then, the police are bound to see many big names being mentioned in the course of their investigations. Many of them may be completely innocent, apart from possible commission by them of economic crimes. Still, the likelihood of their figuring in the investigations underlines the need for the sleuths to cope effectively with all kinds of pressures. Who all, either in India or abroad, were closely associated with the Memon brothers in planning the Bombay blasts? The whole truth about shady goings-on in the film world must be brought out.

Population Crossing 900 Million Mark

93AS0864A Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English
12 May 93 p 5

[Text] India's population is expected to reach the 900-million mark by the end of June this year, according to a study by a private foundation. In the next 32 years, an additional 482 million people will be added to its population as per the estimates of the Population Reference Bureau.

The study says by 2010, the population of China is projected to rise to 1,397.81 million and in 2025 to 1,546.301 million. However, sheer arithmetic, unless India achieves the Chinese success, will make India overtake China as the most populous country in the world. This is because while at the current rate of 2.1 percent increase, India will take 34 years to double the population.

The Chinese are increasing only at the rate of 1.2 percent, which means that they will be doubling the population in 60 years.